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# THE HEBREW MONARCHY



An Interpretation of the English Bible

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# The Hebrew Monarchy

BY

B. H. CARROLL, D.D., LL.D.,

President of Southwestern Baptist  
Theological Seminary

EDITED BY

J. B. CRANFILL, LL.D.

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## EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

**T**HE Hebrew Monarchy" is the eleventh volume of "Carroll's Interpretation of the English Bible."

They have been published in the following order: "Revelation," "Genesis," "Exodus-Leviticus," "Numbers to Ruth," "The Pastoral Epistles," "Daniel and the Inter-Biblical Period," "The Four Gospels," Volume I, "The Four Gospels," Volume II, "The Acts," and "James, Thessalonians, Corinthians."

The present volume concerns itself with the transition period marking the change of the government of the Hebrew nation from that of the judges to that of the kings. Only three kings are considered—Saul, David and Solomon. The book is of intense interest from its opening sentence to its closing word. There is nothing known to me in the catalogue of commentaries covering this period that is more luminous or that holds a greater interest for the Bible student than the present volume. Not only does Dr. Carroll deal with the history, which in itself grips the reader with an enduring charm, but as he progresses in the interpretation of the history he brings to us lessons new and old out of the Divine Word that cannot fail to edify, enlighten, and strengthen every one who shall be so fortunate as to peruse these pages.

In going over this manuscript and preparing it for publication I feel that I have been treading upon sacred ground. It was revised by Dr. Carroll in his last illness while he lay in bed, and the marks of his fast increasing infirmity of body abound throughout the volume. His mind was keen and incisive to the end, and never shone brighter than in his

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labors on this discussion of the last of the judges, the first of the prophets, and the first of the kings of the Hebrew people.

In his interpretation of the Bible Dr. Carroll is at once plain, simple and profound. His words are those that are loved and used in the every-day speech of the multitude. He has never sought to be technical or didactical. On the contrary, by every means at his command (and he was a master of English diction and composition), he has sought to clarify the text of the English Bible and so interpret it as to bring it within the radius of the comprehension of the unlettered, while at the same time investing it with deep interest for the scholar. In all the range of literature of its class there is none that shows a more intimate understanding of the popular mind and at the same time of God's Word and its adaptation to the hearts of the common people than "Carroll's Interpretation of the English Bible."

In his last illness Dr. Carroll was greatly concerned for the proper presentation and exploitation of this and the other volumes that compose this series. He realized that his earthly labors had come to a close, and that the revision of his future works must be performed by other hands. So it has fallen out that Rev. J. W. Crowder and the writer of this introduction have in hand the final shaping of this and the other volumes that are to follow.

More and more as I have addressed myself anew to this task have I been impressed with the strength and wisdom of these words of Dr. Cunningham Geikie which appear in the preface to the second volume of his "Hours with the Bible:" "Life is so short and its responsibilities so great, that honest diligence is alike a necessity and a duty." With this motto thus borne in upon my heart I shall with re-doubled energy, earnestness and zeal labor to perform the task that I undertook while the great Dr. B. H. Carroll was in the flush of perfect health, and which, because he has now gone home



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to God, he will never be able personally to supervise or complete.

In view of the wide-spread ignorance of the Word of God I sincerely hope that this and the other books of this series will find a large and increasing circulation. Their reading and their study cannot fail to be an abiding blessing to all who shall peruse or meditate upon their pages. Like a light-house on some rock-bound coast, they shine out in a world of spiritual darkness and invite the tempest-tossed on the sea of life to come thither and find shelter from life's harassing storms.

Thus this volume is given to the world, bearing with it the impress of the greatest life it has ever been mine personally to know, and the prayers of this writer that God's grace, "bright as the light and soft as the dew," will rest upon its pages and upon the heart of every one to whom this book shall come.

J. B. CRANFILL.

Dallas, Texas.



## I

### AUTHOR'S INTRODUCTION

**T**HE general theme of this section is "The Hebrew Monarchy." The text-book is Crockett's "Harmony of Samuel, Kings and Chronicles." The collateral text-book is Wood's "Hebrew Monarchy." The best and most convenient commentary on Samuel is Kirkpatrick's, in the Cambridge Bible.

Other good text-books on Samuel and his times are: Edersheim's "History of Israel," Vol. IV; Dean's "Samuel and Saul;" Hengstenberg's "Kingdom of God in the O. T.," Vol. II; Hengstenberg's "Christology of the O. T.," Vol. I; Stanley's "Jewish Church;" Geikie's "Hours with the Bible;" Geikie's "Bible Characters—Eli, Samuel, Saul;" Sampey's "Syllabus;" Josephus. A good special commentary on Chronicles is Murphy's.

I Chronicles 8, 9 and 10 parallels I Samuel, and the important distinctions between Samuel and Kings on the one part, and Chronicles on the other part, are:

1. In the time of composition and in the authors, Samuel and Kings were written by authors contemporary with the events, but Chronicles was all compiled by Ezra after the downfall of the monarchy.

2. The purpose was different. Samuel and Kings aim to give a continuous history by contemporaneous authors, of all Israel from the establishment of the kingdom, first showing the transition from Judges to Kings, then the division of the kingdom, then the history of the kingdoms to the downfall of each, a period of five hundred years, all continuous history by contemporaneous authors. But the

purpose of Chronicles is unique. Ignoring the Northern kingdom, it is designed to show merely the genealogy and history of the Davidic line alone, in which the national union is preserved, and, commencing with Adam, it shows the persistence of national life after the downfall of the monarchy. Its viewpoint is the restoration after the captivity by Babylon. And while, indeed, the compiler uses the material of contemporaneous historians, or material of historians contemporaneous with the events as they came to pass, yet it is used as a retrospect.

3. Chronicles is a new and different beginning of Jewish history, rooting in Genesis, and becomes the introduction of all exile and post-exile O. T. books, and for the uninspired books of the inter-biblical period, and hence is a preparation for the coming Messiah in the Davidic line.

4. Hence the first seven chapters of Chronicles parallel O. T. books prior to Samuel, and its last paragraph goes beyond Kings in showing the connection with post-exile history.

5. While it is proper to use Chronicles in the Harmony with Samuel and Kings, one who studies Chronicles in the Harmony only, can never get its true conception. As to the title, "Samuel," to the two books which bear that name, the following explanation is apropos:

1. In the Jewish enumeration the two books are one. A note at the end of II Samuel in the Hebrew Bible still treats the two books as one, and Eusebius, the great church historian, quotes Origen to the effect that the Jews of his day counted the books one. Josephus so counts them.

2. The meaning of the title is two-fold: (a) Up to the death of Samuel it means the author of the book, and (b) as applied to the whole book it means the principal hero of the story up to the time of David.

1. Considering the history and the sources of the material, we learn from I Chronicles 29:29 that the history of



the reign of David is ascribed to three prophets—Samuel, Nathan and Gad; and from other passages in Chronicles we learn that other prophets took up the story. So far as the scope of I and II Samuel extends we may well say that the writers were Samuel, Nathan and Gad, *i.e.*, Samuel up to I Samuel 25, then Nathan and Gad.

2. I Chronicles 27:24 tells us of the state-records of David's reign, and from these records may have been obtained such matter as appears in II Samuel 8:16-18; 20:23-26; 23:8-39.

3. In I Samuel 10:25 we learn that the charter of the kingdom is expressly said to have been written by Samuel.

4. It is very probable that the national poetic literature furnished Hannah's song, I Samuel 2:1-10; David's lament for Abner, II Samuel 3:33, 34; David's Thanksgiving, II Samuel 22, which is also the same as Psalm 18; the last words of David, II Samuel 23:1-7. David's lament for Saul and Jonathan, II Samuel 1:18-27, is expressly said to be taken from the book of Jasher.

Certain passages in the book itself bear on the date of the compilation in its present form:

1. There is an explanation in I Samuel 9:9 of old terms which would be necessary, for the terms were not in use when the book was compiled.

2. There is a reference to obsolete customs in II Samuel 13:18.

3. The phrase "unto this day" is repeated seven times: I Samuel 5:5, 6:18, 27:6, 30:25; II Samuel 4:3, 6:8, 18:18.

4. II Samuel 5:5 refers to the whole reign of David.

5. In the Septuagint, but not in the Hebrew, there are references extending to Rehoboam, Solomon's son.

6. In I Samuel 27:6 mention of the kings of Judah seems to imply that the divisions of the kingdom in Reho-

boam's day had taken place. The conclusion as to the date of the present form is that it was compiled soon after the division of the kingdom. The canonicity of Samuel has never been questioned. It is remarkably accurate, and every way reliable. Each part is the language of the contemporaneous historian who was an eyewitness of the scenes, though there are some parts difficult to harmonize, which will be noticed particularly as they come up.

The materials for the text are the Hebrew Manuscript, and the versions, towit: The Septuagint, the Chaldean, or Aramaic, and the Vulgate. Our manuscripts of the Septuagint are mainly the Alexandrian Manuscript of the 5th century A. D., and the Vatican Manuscript of the 4th century. The Alexandrian Manuscript conforms most nearly to the Hebrew text, there being an important variation in the Vatican Manuscript from the Hebrew text that will be subsequently noted. The Chaldean, or Aramaic version, commonly known as the Targum of Jonathan Ben Uzziel, is more a commentary or paraphrase than a translation, and that, too, of the later Jews. In the third note to the Appendix of I Samuel in the Cambridge Bible you will find in this Targum quite a remarkable addition to Hannah's Song, ascribing to her a prophecy that touches the destruction of the Philistines; the descendants of Samuel, who form a part of the Davidic choir, and concerns Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar, Greece, Haman and Rome. For this prophecy, there is no inspired foundation.

Dr. Sampey, of the Louisville Seminary, says that the text of this section needs editing more than any other part of the Bible, and there are some peculiarities of the text which we will now take up:

1. Certain passages exist in duplicate, all of them in II Samuel except I Samuel 31, which is the same as I Chronicles 10:1-12.

2. There are others remarkably similar; for example,

compare the account in chapters 23:19 to 24:22 with chapter 26.

3. The Septuagint in the Vatican Manuscript differs from the Alexandrian Manuscript, and also from the Hebrew, in omitting a considerable part of chapters 17 and 18. The omission removes certain difficulties but creates others:

4. The narrative of the Witch of Endor raising the ghost or shade of Samuel (chapter 28) has provoked controversies in every age, and special attention will be given to that when we get to it.

5. In I Samuel 1:3 will be found an entirely new name of God. It is not found in any antecedent O. T. book nor in but few subsequent O. T. books. The name of the Lord of Sabaoth, which means the "Lord of Hosts." All of these peculiarities will be noted more particularly as we come to them.

The following is Dr. Kirkpatrick's analysis of I Samuel:

I. The close of the period of the Judges, chapters 1-7.

1. The early life of Samuel, extending from 1:1 to 4:1a.
2. The judgments of Eli and the loss of the Ark, 4:1b-7:1.
3. The judicial life of Samuel, 7:2-17.

II. The foundation of the monarchy, chapters 8-31.

1. The appointment of the first king, chapters 8-10.
2. Saul's reign unto his rejection, chapters 11-15.
3. Decline of Saul and rise of David, chapters 16-31.

## QUESTIONS

1. What the general theme of this section?
2. What the text-book?
3. What the collateral text-book?
4. What the best and most convenient commentary on Samuel?
5. What other good text-books on Samuel and his times?
6. What special commentary on Chronicles commended?
7. What part of I Chronicles parallels I Samuel?
8. What important distinctions between Samuel and Kings on the one part, and Chronicles on the other part?
9. What of the title, "Samuel," to the two books which bear that name?
10. Who wrote the history, and what the sources of the material?
11. What passages in the book itself bear on the date of the compilation in its present form?
12. What the conclusion as to the date of the present form?
13. What of the canonicity of Samuel?
14. What of the accuracy and reliability of the history?
15. What can you say of the text of the book of Samuel?
16. What does Dr. Sampey say of the text?
17. What peculiarities of the text noted?
18. Whose analysis commended, and what its main divisions and subdivisions?

## II

### THE EARLY LIFE OF SAMUEL

*Scriptures:* References in Harmony, pp. 62-66

WE omit Part I of the text-book, since that first part is devoted to genealogical tables taken from I Chronicles. That part of Chronicles is not an introduction to Samuel or Kings, but an introduction to the Old Testament books written after the Babylonian captivity. To put that in now would be out of place.

We need to emphasize the supplemental character of Chronicles. Our Harmony indeed will show from time to time in successive details the very important contributions of that nature in Chronicles not found in any form in the histories of Samuel and Kings, nor elsewhere in the O. T.; but to appreciate the magnitude of this new matter we need to glance at it in bulk, not in detail, as its parts will come up later.

*There are twenty whole chapters and parts of twenty-four other chapters in Chronicles occupied with matter not found in other books of the Bible.*

This is a considerable amount of new material, and is valuable on that account, but it is still more valuable because it presents a new aspect of Hebrew history after the captivity. The following passages in Chronicles contain new matter: I Chronicles 2:18-55; 3:19-24; all of chapters 4; 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9; chapter 11:41-47; all of chapter 12; chapter 15:1-26; all of chapters 22 to 29; II Chronicles 6:40-42; chapter 11:5-23; chapter 12:4-8; chapter 13:3-21; chapter 14:3-15; chapter 15:1-15; chapter 16:7-10; all of chapters 17 and 19; chapter 20:1-30; chapter 21:2-4, 11-19; and chapter 24:15-22; chapter 25:5-10, 12-16;



chapter 26:5-20; chapter 27:4-6; chapter 28:5-25; chapter 29:3-36; all of chapters 30 and 31; chapter 32:22, 23, 26-31; chapter 33:11-19; chapter 34:3-7; chapter 35:2-17, 25; chapter 36:11-23.

Whoever supposed that there was that much material in the book of Chronicles that could not be found anywhere else? One can study Chronicles as a part of a Harmony with Samuel and Kings, but if that were the only way it could be studied he would never get the true significance of it, as it is an introduction to all of the later O. T. books. In the light of these important new additions, we not only see the introduction of all subsequent O. T. books and also inter-biblical books by Jews, but must note the transition in thought from a secular Jewish kingdom to an approaching spiritual Messianic kingdom.

We thus learn that O. T. prophecy is not limited to distinct utterances foretelling future events, but that the whole history of the Jewish people is prophetic; not merely in its narrative, but in its legislation, in its types, feasts, Sabbaths, sacrifices, offerings; in its tabernacle and temple, with all of their divinely appointed worship and ritual, and this explains why the historical books are classed as prophetic, not merely because prophets wrote them, which is true, but also because the history is prophetic.

*In this fact lies one of the strongest proofs of the inspiration of the Old Testament books in all of their parts. The things selected for record, and the things not recorded, are equally forcible. The silence equals the utterance. This is characteristic of no other literature, and shows divine supervision which not only makes necessary every part recorded, but so correlates and adapts the parts as to make a perfect literary and spiritual structure which demands a New Testament as a culmination.*

Moreover, we are blind if we cannot see a special Providence preparing a leader for every transition in Jewish

history. Just as Moses was prepared for deliverance from Egypt, and for the disposition of the law, so Samuel is prepared, not only to guide from a government by judges to a government by kings, but, what is very much more important, to establish a School of the Prophets—a theological seminary.

*These prophets were to be the mouth-pieces of God in speaking to kingly and national conscience, and for five hundred years afterwards, become the orators, poets, historians and reformers of the nation, and so, for centuries, avert, postpone or remedy, national disasters provoked by public corruption of morals and religion.*

*Counting great men as peaks of a mountain range, and sighting backwards from Samuel to Abraham, only one peak, Moses, comes into the line of vision.*

There are other peaks, but they don't come up high enough to rank with Abraham, Moses and Samuel. A list of the twelve best and greatest men in the world's history must include the name of Samuel. When we come, at his death, to analyze his character and posit him among the great, other things will be said. Just now we are to find in his early life that such a man did not merely happen; that neither heredity, environment nor chance produced him.

Samuel was born at Ramah, lived at Ramah, died at Ramah and was buried at Ramah. Ramah is a little village in the mountains of Ephraim, somewhat north of the city of Jerusalem. It is right hard to locate Ramah on any present map of the Holy Land. Some would put it south, some north. It is not easy to locate like Bethlehem and Shiloh.

Samuel belonged to the tribe of Levi, but was not a descendant of Aaron. If he had been he would have been either a high priest or a priest. Only Aaron's descendants could be high priests, or priests, but Samuel belonged to the tribe of Levi, and from I Chronicles 6 you may trace

his descent. The tribe of Levi had no continuous landed territory like the other tribes, but was distributed among the other tribes. That tribe belonged to God, and they had no land assigned them except the villages in which they lived and the cities of refuge, of which they had charge, and so Samuel's father could be called an Ephrathite and yet be a descendant of the tribe of Levi—that is, he was a Levite living in the territory of Ephraim.

The bigamy of Samuel's father produced the usual bitter fruit. The first and favorite wife had no children, so in order to perpetuate his name he took a second wife, and when that second wife bore him a large brood of children she gloried over the first wife, and provoked her and mocked at her for having no children, and it produced a great bitterness in Hannah's soul. The history of the Mormons demonstrates that bitterness always accompanies a plurality of wives. I don't see how a woman can share a home or husband with any other woman.

We will now consider the attitude of the Mosaic law toward a plurality of wives, divorce, etc. In Deuteronomy 21: 15-17 we see that the Mosaic law did permit an existing custom. It did not originate it nor command it, but it tolerated the universal custom of the times—a plurality of wives. From Deuteronomy 24: 1-4, we learn that the law permitted a husband to get rid of a wife, but commanded him to give her a bill of divorcement. That law was not made to encourage divorce, but to limit the evil and to protect the woman who would suffer under divorce. Why the law even permitted these things we see from Matthew 19: 7, 8. Our Savior there tells us that Moses, on account of the hardness of their hearts, permitted a man to put away his wife. That is to say, that nation had just emerged from slavery, and the prevalent custom all around them permitted something like that, and because they were not prepared for an ideal law on the subject on account of the hardness

of their hearts, Moses tolerated, without commending a plurality of wives or commanding divorce—both in a way to mitigate the evil—but when Jesus comes to give His statute on the subject He speaks out and says, “Whosoever shall put away his wife except for marital infidelity and marries again committeth adultery, and whosoever shall marry her that is put away committeth adultery.” A preacher in a recent sermon, as reported, discredited that part of Matthew because not found also in Mark. I have no respect for the radical criticism which makes Mark the only credible gospel, or even the norm of the others. Nor can any man show one shred of evidence that it is so. I have a facsimile of the three oldest New Testament manuscripts. What Matthew says is there, and may not be eliminated on such principles of criticism.

The radical critics say that the Levitical part of the Mosaic law was not written by Moses, but by a priest in Ezekiel’s time, and that Israel had no central place of worship in the period of the judges, but this section shows that they did have a central place of worship at Shiloh, and the book of Joshua shows when Shiloh became the central place of worship. The text shows that they did come up yearly to this central place of worship, and that they did offer, as in the case of Hannah and Elkanah, the sacrifices required in Leviticus.

In Joshua 18:1 we learn that when the conquest was finished Joshua, himself, placed the Ark and the Tabernacle at Shiloh, and constituted it the central place of worship. In this section we learn what disaster ended Shiloh as the central place of worship. The Ark was captured, and subsequently the Tabernacle was removed, and that Ark and that Tabernacle never got together again. In Jeremiah 7:12 we read: “But go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I caused my name to dwell at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my

people Israel." Jeremiah is using that history as a threat against Jerusalem, which in Jeremiah's time was the central place of worship. His lesson was, "*If you repeat the wickedness done in Samuel's time God will do to your city and your home what He did to Shiloh.*"

It is important to know the subsequent separate history of the Ark and the Tabernacle, and when and where another permanent central place and house of worship were established. The Bible tells us every move that Ark and that Tabernacle made, and when, where and by whom the permanent central place and house of worship were established.

Eli was high priest at Samuel's birth. In those genealogical tables that we omitted from I Chronicles we see that Eli was a descendant of Aaron, but not of Eleazar, the eldest son; therefore, according to the Mosaic law, he ought never to have been high priest, but he was, and I will have something to say about that when the true line is established later. I Samuel 4, which comes in the next chapter, distinctly states that Eli judged Israel 40 years, and he was likely a contemporary of Samson. But Eli, at the time we know him, is ninety-eight years old, and nearly blind. He was what we call a good-hearted man, but weak. That combination in a ruler makes him a curse. Diplomats tell us "a blunder is worse than a crime," in a ruler. He shows his weakness in allowing his sons, Hophni and Phinehas, to degrade the worship of God. They were acting for him, as he was too old for active service. The most awful reports came to him about the infamous character of these sons, who occupied the highest and holiest office in a nation that belonged to God.

This section tells us that he only remonstrated in his weak way: "My sons, it is not a good report that I hear about you," but that is all he did. As he was judge and high priest, why should he prefer his sons to the honor of



God? Why did he not remove them from positions of trust and influence? His doom is announced in this section, and it is an awful one. God sent a special prophet to him and this is the doom. You will find it in chapter 2, commencing at verse 30: "Wherefore the Lord, the God of Israel, saith, I said indeed that thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me forever: but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me; for them that honor me I will honor, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father's house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house. And thou shalt see an enemy in my habitation (Shiloh), in all the wealth which God shall give Israel: and there shall not be an old man among thy descendants forever. And the descendants of thine, whom I do not cut off from mine altar, shall live to consume thine eyes, and grieve thine heart: and all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age."

Or as Samuel puts it to him, we read in chapter 3, commencing at verse 11: "And the Lord said unto Samuel, Behold I will do a thing in Israel, at which both the ears of every one that heareth it shall tingle. In that day I shall perform against Eli all things that I have spoken against his house: when I begin I will also make an end. For I have told him that I will judge his house forever for the iniquity which he knoweth, because his sons made themselves vile and he restrained them not; therefore I have sworn unto the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever."

What was the sign of his doom? The same passage answers: "And this shall be a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas: in one day they shall die both of them. And I will raise me up a faithful priest, that shall do according to that which is in my heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure

house; and he shall walk before mine anointed forever. And it shall come to pass, that everyone that is left in thy house shall come and bow down to him for a piece of silver and a loaf of bread." That was the sign. In the time of Solomon the priesthood goes back to the true line, in fulfillment of the declaration in that sign. The priesthood passes away from Eli's descendants and goes back where it belongs—to Zadok—who is a descendant of Aaron's eldest son.

The Philistine nation at this time dominated Israel. The word, "Philistines," means emigrant-people that go out from their native land, and it is of the same derivation as the word "Palestine." That Holy Land, strangely enough, takes its name from the Philistines. The Philistines were descended from Mizraim, a child of Ham, and their place was in Egypt. Leaving Egypt they became "Philistines," that is, emigrants, and occupied all of that splendid lowland on the western and southwestern part of the Jewish territory, next to the Mediterranean Sea, which was as level as a plain, and as fertile as the Nile valley. There they established five independent cities, which, like the Swiss Cantons, formed a confederacy. While each was independent for local affairs, they united in offensive and defensive alliances against other nations, and they had complete control of Southern Judea at this time. Joshua had overpowered them, but the conquest was not complete. They rose up from under his power, even in his time, and in the time of Samson and Eli they brought Israel into a pitiable subjection. They were not allowed to have even a grindstone. If they wanted to sharpen an axe they had to go and borrow a Philistine's grindstone, and what a good text for a sermon!

*Woe to the man that has to sharpen the implement with which he works in the shop of an enemy! Woe to the Southern preacher that goes to a radical critic's Seminary in order to sharpen his theological axe!*

Speaking of the evils of a plurality of wives, we found Hannah in great bitterness of heart because she had no child, and we saw her lingering at the central place of worship, and without saying words out loud, her lips were moving, and her face was as one entranced, so that Eli thinks she is drunk. The N. T. tells us of a certain likeness between intoxication with ardent spirits and intoxication of the Holy Spirit. She told him that she was praying. When her child was born she came back and said to him, "I am the woman that you thought was drunk, but I was praying," and then she uses this language: "I prayed for this child," holding the little fellow up in her hands, "and I vowed that if God would give him to me I would lend him to the Lord all the days of his life," and therefore she brings him to be consecrated perpetually to God's service. The scripture brings all that out beautifully.

So the text speaks of the woes pronounced on a parent who put off praying for and restraining his children until they were grown. Like Hannah we should commence praying for them before they are born; pray for them in the cradle, and if you make any promise or vow to God for them, keep the vow.

I know a woman who had many children and kept praying that God would send her one preacher child, promising to do everything in her power to make him a great preacher. The Lord gave her two. One of my deacons used to send for me when a new baby was born, to pray for it. Oliver Wendell Holmes says a child's education should commence with his grandmother. Paul tells us that this was so with Timothy. The Mosaic law required every male to appear before the Lord at the central place of worship three times a year. The text says that Elkanah went up yearly, but does not state how many times a year. The inference is fairly drawn that he strictly kept the Mosaic law.

Samuel had certain duties in the Tabernacle. He slept

in the Lord's house and tended to the lights. It is a great pity when a child of darkness attends to the lights in God's house.

I heard a preacher say to a sexton, "How is it that you ring the bell to call others to heaven and you, yourself, seem going right down to hell?" And that same preacher said to a surveyor, "You survey land for other people to have a home, and have no home yourself." So some preachers point out the boundaries of the home in heaven and make their own bed in hell.

Samuel's call from God, his first prophecy, and his recognition by the people as a prophet are facts of great interest, and the lesson from his own failure to at once recognize the call is of great value. In the night he heard a voice saying, "Samuel! Samuel!" He thought it was Eli, and he went to Eli and said, "Here I am. You called me." "No, I didn't call you, my son; go back to bed." The voice came again, "Samuel, Samuel," and he got up and went to Eli and said, "You *did* call me. What do you want with me?" "No, my son, I did not call you; go back and lie down," and the third time the voice came, "Samuel, Samuel," and he went again to Eli. Then Eli knew that it was God who called him, and he said, "My son, it is the Lord. You go back and when the voice comes again, say, Speak, Lord; for thy servant heareth," and so God spoke and the first burden of prophecy that He put upon the boy's heart was to tell the doom of the house of Eli. Very soon after that all Israel recognized Samuel as a prophet of God.

The value of the lesson is this: We don't always recognize the divine touch at first. Many a man under conviction does not at first understand its source and nature. Others, even after they are converted, are not sure they are converted. It is like the mover's chickens that, after their legs were untied, would lie still, not realizing that they were free. The ligatures around their legs had cut off the circu-

lation, and they felt as if they were tied after they were loose. There is always an interval between an event and the cognition of it. For example, when a shot is fired it precedes our recognition of it by either the sight of smoke or the sound of the explosion, for it takes both sound and sight some time to travel over the intervening space. I heard Major Penn say that the worst puzzle in his life was the experiences whereby God called him to quit his law work and become an evangelist. He didn't understand it. It was like Samuel going to Eli.

I now will give an analysis of that gem of Hebrew poetry, Hannah's song, showing its conception of God, and the reason of its imitation in the New Testament. The idea of Hannah's conception of God thus appears:

There is none besides God; He stands alone. There is none holy but God. There is none that abaseth the proud and exalteth the lowly, feedeth the hungry, and maketh the full hungry, except God; and there is none but God that killeth and maketh alive. There is none but God who establisheth this earth; none but God who keepeth the feet of His saints; none but God that has true strength; none but God that judgeth the ends of the earth, and the chief excellency of it is the last: "He shall give strength unto His king and exalt the horn of His Anointed." That is the first place in the Bible where the kingly office is mentioned in connection with the name "Anointed." The name, "Anointed," means Christ, the Messiah.

It is true that it was prophesied to Abraham that kings should be his descendants. It is true that Moses made provision for a king. It is true that in the book of Judges anointing is shown to be the method of setting apart to kingly office, but this is the first place in the Bible where the one anointed gets the name of the "Anointed One," a king. Because of this Messianic characteristic, Mary, when it was announced to her that she should be the mother of



the Anointed King, pours out her soul in the Magnificat, imitating Hannah's song.

The state of religion at this time was very low. We see from the closing of the book of Judges that at the feast of Shiloh they had irreligious dances. We see from the text here that Hophni and Phinehas, the priests of religion, were not only as corrupt as anybody, but leaders in corruption. We see it declared that there is no open vision, and it is further declared that the Word of God was precious—rare.

I will now explain these two phrases in the texts, I Sam. 1: 16 (A. V.), where Hannah says, "Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial," and in 2: 12 (A. V.), where Hophni and Phinehas are said to be the "sons of Belial." The common version makes Belial a proper name; the revised version does not, and the revised version is at fault. If you will turn to II Cor. 6: 15, you will see that Belial is shown to be the name of Satan: "What concord hath Christ with Belial?" Get Milton's "Paradise Lost," First Book, and read the reference to Hophni and Phinehas as sons of Belial, and see that he correctly makes it a proper name.

Samuel was not a descendant of Aaron. He was merely a Levite, but he subsequently, as we shall learn, officiated in sacrifices as if he were a priest or high priest. It will be remembered that the priesthood was under the curse pronounced on Eli, and Samuel was a special exceptional appointee of God, as Moses was.

Dr. Burleson, a great Texas preacher, and president of Baylor University, preached all over Texas a sermon on family government, taking his text from I Sam. 2: 31.

There are some passages and quotations from Geikie's "Hours With the Bible" on the evils of a plurality of wives that are pertinent. Commenting on Elkanah's double marriage he says, "But, as might have been expected, this double marriage—a thing even then uncommon—did not add to

his happiness, for even among the Orientals the misery of polygamy is proverbial. 'From what I know,' says one, 'it is easier to live with two tigeresses than with two wives.' And a Persian poet is of well-nigh the same opinion:—

"Be that man's life immersed in gloom  
Who needs more wives than one:  
With one his cheeks retain their bloom,  
His voice a cheerful tone:  
These speak his honest heart at rest,  
And he and she are always blest.  
But when with two he seeks for joy,  
Together they his soul annoy;  
With two no sunbeam of delight  
Can make his day of misery bright.'

"An old Eastern Drama is no less explicit:—

"Wretch! would'st thou have another wedded slave?  
Another? What? Another? At thy peril  
Presume to try the experiment: would'st thou not  
For that unconscionable, foul desire  
Be linked to misery? Sleepless nights, and days  
Of endless torment—still recurring sorrow  
Would be thy lot. Two wives! O never! Never!  
Thou hast not power to please two rival queens;  
Their tempers would destroy thee; sear thy brain;  
Thou canst not, Sultan, manage more than one.  
Even one may be beyond thy government!'"

## QUESTIONS

1. Why omit Part I of the text-book?
2. What, in bulk, is the supplemental matter in Chronicles, and what its importance?
3. What and where the place of Samuel's birth, residence and burial?
4. What his ancestry and tribe?
5. If he belonged to the tribe of Levi, why then is he called an Ephraimite, or Ephrathite, which in this place is equivalent?
6. Show that the bigamy of Samuel's father produced the usual bitter fruit.
7. What was the attitude of the Mosaic law toward a plurality of wives, and divorce, and why?
8. Why did the law ever permit these things?
9. What is the bearing of this section on the contention of the radical critics that the Levitical part of the Mosaic law was not written by Moses, but by a priest in Ezekiel's time, and that Israel had no central place of worship in the period of the Judges?

10. When did Shiloh become the central place of worship, how long did it so remain, and what use did Jeremiah make of its desolation?

11. Trace the subsequent and separate history of the Ark and the Tabernacle, and show when and where another permanent central place and house of worship were established.

12. Who was high priest at Samuel's birth, how was he descended from Aaron, and what the proof that he also judged Israel?

13. With which of the judges named in the book of Judges was he likely a contemporary?

14. What was Eli's character, sin, doom, sign of the doom, and who announced it to him?

15. What nation at this time dominated Israel?

16. Give a brief and clear account of these people.

17. Show how Samuel was a child of prayer, the subject of a vow, a Nazarite, how consecrated to service, and the lessons therefrom.

18. How often did the Mosaic law require every male to appear before the Lord at the central place of worship, and to what extent was this law fulfilled by Samuel's father and mother?

19. What were the duties of the child Samuel in the Tabernacle?

20. Give an account of Samuel's call from God, his first prophecy, his recognition by the people as a prophet, and the lesson from his own failure, for a while, to recognize the call.

21. Analyze that gem of Hebrew poetry, Hannah's song, showing its conception of God, and give the reason of its imitation in the New Testament.

22. What was the state of religion at this time?

23. Explain the references to Belial in I Sam. 1:16 and 2:12.

24. As Samuel was not a descendant of Aaron, but merely a Levite, why does he subsequently, as we shall learn, officiate in sacrifices as if he were a priest or high priest?

25. What great Texas preacher preached all over Texas a sermon on family government, taking his text from I Sam. 2:31?

26. Cite the passages and quotations from "Geikie's Hours with the Bible" on the evils of a plurality of wives.

### III

## THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF ELI, AND THE RISE OF SAMUEL

*Scriptures:* References in Harmony, pp. 66-69

**I** WILL give, in order, the passages showing the rise of Samuel over against the descent of Eli. Samuel, more than any other book of the Bible, excels in vividness of detail, and especially in showing progressiveness in character, either upward or downward—either growing better or worse. Over against the iniquities of Eli's sons and the doom pronounced on his house, we have in order, these passages: I Sam. 1:27, 28; 2:18, and the last clause of verse 21; 2:26; 3:1-4; also 19-21; and 4:1.

The progress is: (1) For this child I prayed. (2) The child prayed for is devoted to Jehovah. (3) His home is God's house and there he serves and worships. (4) The child is called. (5) The child grew in favor with God and man. (6) The child kept on growing. (7) He is recognized as a prophet by all Israel from Dan to Beersheba. In the meantime Eli's house steadily descends until the bottom is reached.

Macaulay, in his "History of England," in telling about the great men in power at a certain time, including Lord Halifax, substantially makes this remark: "These great men did not know that they were even then being eclipsed by two young men who were rising up, that would attain to greater heights and influence than the others had ever attained," and he gives the names of the two young men as John Somers and Charles Montague.

You may apply this throughout life: A train once in motion will run for a while on its own impetus, but in both cases the motion will gradually cease unless new power be applied. So in every community there are leaders holding position from past momentum, while new men are rising that will eclipse and succeed them. As in nature when a tree quits growing it begins to die, and when a stream quits flowing its waters stagnate, so when a leader quits studying he begins to lose power and must give place to younger men who are studious. And it will some day be so with you, and you will enter what is called the declining period of your life. For a while it will astonish you that you are not cutting as wide a swath as you used to cut, and unless you live only in God, that will be the bitterest hour of your life. Very few people know how to grow old gracefully; some of them become very bitter as they grow old.

The following is a summary of the events connected with the fall of the house of Eli:

I. An enemy is strengthened to smite them. The absence of purity, piety, veneration and fidelity in God's people—either His nominal people like Hophni and Phinehas, or His real people, as Eli—always develops a conquering enemy. The case of Samson, Eli's contemporaneous judge, illustrates this. When he betrayed the secret of his strength, he went out as aforetime and knew not that the Spirit of the Lord had departed from him, and so became an easy victim of the Philistines—bound, eyes put out, enslaved, grinding in the mills of God's enemies, a sport to them, with the added despair that the cause suffered in his downfall.

*The devil has known from the beginning that his only chance to win against God's people is, by their sins, to turn God against them. He knows that as long as God is for you, nobody can be against you. He knows that he cannot fight against you when you have God back of you, but if*



*you become estranged from God, the devil will show you very quickly that when it comes to a wrestle he can give you a fall, and it does not take him long to do it.*

It was in this way that he influenced Balaam to suggest to Balak the plan to make Israel sin with women, as a step toward idolatry. His slogan was: "If you can make them sin against their God and put Him against them, then you can down them." The Phinehas of that day, how different from this Phinehas, Eli's son! Naming a child after a great and good man does not make him like his namesake.

One of the most unpatriotic men I ever knew was named after George Washington; one of the greatest failures as a preacher was named after Spurgeon; one of the poorest excuses for a statesman was named after Sam Houston.

Now here is Phinehas, the son of Eli, named after that other Phinehas of Balaam's time.

The devil, here called Belial, is never better satisfied than when he can nominate his own children as ministers of religion. Hophni and Phinehas, children of Belial, were priests. The prevalent evils of today arise from the fact that children of Belial occupy many pulpits and many chairs in theological seminaries and Christian schools. Always they are the advance couriers of disaster to God's cause, and herald the coming of a triumphant adversary.

*When preachers and professors in schools begin to hawk at and peck at the Bible, and rend it with their talons, or defile the spiritual feasts like harpies, you should not only count them as unclean birds of prey, but should begin to set your own house in order, for trouble is coming fast.*

2. *The Philistines won a battle.* Four thousand Israelites were slain.

3. Stimulated by fear, the sons of Eli resorted to an expedient, tempting God. They sent for the Ark, taking it from its appointed place to be used as a fetish or charm. So used as an instrument of superstition it had no more

power to avert evil than a negro's use of a rabbit's foot, or the nailing up of a horse shoe over a door to keep off witches.

*As religion becomes decadent its votaries resort to charms, amulets, relics of the saints, alleged pieces of the Cross, images and other kinds of evil, instead of resorting to repentance, faith and obedience. So used, the most sacred symbol becomes worse than any common thing.*

We will see later in Jewish history the idolatrous worship of the brazen serpent made by Moses, and we will hear good King Hezekiah say, as he breaks it to pieces, "Nehushtan," i.e., "it is only a piece of brass." As a symbol, when lifted up, it was of great use, but when used as an object of worship it became only a piece of brass. A student of history knows that a multiplication of holy days, pyrotechnic displays, games, festivities, plays and cruel sports, until there are no days to work, marks the decadence of a people. You need not be afraid of any nation that gives great attention to fireworks—a characteristic of the Latin races.

We shout in vain: "The Ark of the Lord! The Ark of the Lord!" when we fail to follow the Lord himself. No issue is made in that way, as it is not an issue of the Lord against Dagon, but a superstitious and impious use of sacred symbols against the devil, and the devil will whip every time. In the medieval times, early in the history of the crusades, you can see that even the Cross so used falls before the Crescent, the sign of Mahomet's followers.

*We might as well seek the remission of sins in baptism, or salvation in the bread of the Supper, as to expect God's favor sought by any such means.*

When Elisha smote the Jordan with Elijah's mantle, he trusted not to the mantle, nor did he say, "Where is Elijah?" but he said, "Where is the *Lord God* of Elijah?" and so he divided the waters.

3. The Philistines won another battle. Thirty thousand Israelites perished; Hophni and Phinehas were slain; the Ark was captured; Eli died, and the wife of Phinehas died in premature labor, naming her new born babe, "Ichabod," that is, "The glory is departed from Israel;" Shiloh was captured and made desolate forever, ceasing to be the central place of worship; both the Ark and the Tabernacle became fugitives, separating never to meet again, and so Israel lamented after the Lord.

4. The Philistines regarded the capture of the Ark, (1) as a triumph of their god, Dagon, over Jehovah, the God of Israel, and so they placed it in a subordinate position before Dagon in their Temple. (2) They regarded it as the capture of Jehovah himself, obligated by His captivity to now serve the Philistines as He had heretofore ministered to Israel.

The prevalence of such conceptions in ancient times is very evident. For ages the presence of a deity was associated with his symbol. To capture his symbol, or image, was to capture the deity, as in the story of Aladdin in "The Arabian Nights," whoever held the lamp of the genie controlled the genie himself. Assyrian sculptures today exhibit the idols of vanished nations borne in triumphant procession, and the parade is always to show that they have triumphed over the gods of that country.

The Hebrew prophets allude to this custom frequently. The passages are Isa. 46:1, Jer. 48:7 and 49:3, Hosea 10:6 and Dan. 11:8. Cyrus, when he captured Babylon, adopted its gods, but the Romans under Marcellus brought to adorn their own cities the captured images and pictures of the Greek gods. Nebuchadnezzar carried away the sacred symbols of Jerusalem when he captured that city, as did Titus after our Lord's time, and you can see in Rome today, carved on the Arch, the seven-branched Golden Candlestick which Titus carried from the Temple of Jerusalem

in triumph to Rome. The Roman general, Fabius, when he captured the City of Tarentum, said to his soldiers, "Leave their gods here; their gods are mad at them; so let us leave them with their gods which they have offended," and so they left the idols. It would have been a good thing, as after-events show, had Nebuchadnezzar done the same thing, for when Belshazzar, his successor, on a certain night at a drunken feast, used the sacred vessels of the temple for desecration, it was then that the hand came out and wrote on the wall, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin."

Jehovah showed the Philistines that their victory was not over Him. (1) By causing the image of Dagon to fall down before the Ark, and when they set it up again, caused it to fall down again, and to break its head and arms off; (2) by sending two great plagues: tumors or boils, violent and fatal, under which thousands died, and field mice that swarmed so as to destroy the great harvests of grain that made their land famous; (3) by causing the cessation of the worship of Dagon in Ashdod, for after taking the falls and breaking his head and arms off, no man would go in and worship Dagon.

A natural inquiry when an individual or a people is subject to a series of severe and extraordinary disasters is, What sin have we committed and how may we expiate it, or avert its judgment? Such an inquiry is inseparably connected with any conception of the moral government of God. Men may indeed often fail to note that all afflictions are not punitive, some being disciplinary, or preparatory to greater displays of mercy. You see this problem discussed in the case of Job and his friends; also to those who asked Jesus, "Who did sin, this man or his parents?" He answered that this affliction did not result from personal sin of either of them, but that the glory of God might be manifested. It is the most natural thing in the world for anybody who has suffered one buffet of ill fortune after an-

other, to ask, "What have I done?" and it is perfectly natural for the neighbors to point out that one and say, "Ah, you have been doing something against the Lord: your sin is finding you out." Therefore it was the most natural thing in the world for the Philistines, when they saw such disasters coming in connection with the capture of the Ark, to put the question, "What is our sin?"

We will see what expedients the Philistines adopted to determine whether their calamities came only in a natural way, or were supernatural afflictions connected with the Ark and coming from the offended Jehovah, and if from Jehovah, how He was to be appeased. I Sam. 5:7-11 gives us the first expedient: "We will move this Ark from Ashdod to the next one of the five cities, and see what happens then. If the same things happen there, we will move it to the next city, and if the same things happen there we will move it to the next city, and so on around the circle of the five cities, and if the same results follow all of these cities, such a series of incidents will be regarded as full proof that the judgments are from Jehovah."

You will recall the story of the boy and the cow bells. He said, "When my father found a cow bell, Ma and I were mighty glad, for we needed one. And when he found another cow bell we were glad again, for we really needed another one, but when Dad found another cow bell, Ma and I became suspicious." A man would not naturally find three cow bells one after another, so they thought that "Dad" had stolen them. So when five cities, one after the other, had the same afflictions, they could not call that chance.

I knew of a general in a terrible battle who, when a bomb-shell as big as a water bucket came from a gunboat, cut through a tree and sank into the ground, making an excavation that you could put a house in, ran and put his head right into the hole where the shell came. Somebody



asked him why, and he said that such a shell as that would never come twice in the same place. And so the Philistine idea was to move the Ark from Ashdod to the next city, and if nothing happened, then they were mistaken about this being chastisement from Jehovah, but if wherever they took it there came the mice and boils on the inhabitants, they were not mistaken, and they could not misunderstand.

That was their first expedient. Their second expedient was to call upon their religious leaders, their diviners and soothsayers, and to ask them to tell them how they could conciliate Jehovah. And the diviners told them that the Ark must be sent back, and it must be sent back with a gift, and the gift must signify their confession of sin. In the olden times if a man was healed of a wound in his hand, the Lord was presented with a silver offering to commemorate the healing of the hand. So they had five golden mice made, one for each city, and five golden tumors, one for each city, to symbolize their conception that the evils had come upon them for this offence to Jehovah. But as there still might be a question as to whether these afflictions were natural or supernatural, they tested it in this way: They went to the pen where were cows with young calves (you know what a fool a cow is over her first calf when it is little) and hitched two of these cows to a cart, put the Ark on it, to see if the cows, against nature, would go away and leave their calves willingly, and still thinking about the calves and calling them, would carry the Ark back to some city of the Levites; that would show that Jehovah was in it.

That was a pretty wise idea of those Philistines, and so when they took a new cart and put the Ark on it, and took those two mother cows, they never hesitated but struck a bee-line for the nearest Levite city, about twelve miles, and they went bellowing, showing that they felt the absence from their calves. These were their two expedients.

I Sam. 6:19, 20 says that some of the people at Beth-

shemesh looked into the Ark to see what was in there, and the blow fell in a minute. No man was authorized to open that sacred chamber over which the Mercy-seat rested and on which the cherubs sat, but the high priests of God. If you will turn to the Septuagint, you will find another remarkable thing which does not appear in the Hebrew Bible, viz.: all of the Levites of the city of Beth-shemesh rejoiced at the return of the Ark of God, except one man, Jeconiah, and his family, who refused to rejoice at its homecoming, and God smote that family in a moment.

Now, a later instance: When the Ark, at the request of the citizens of Beth-shemesh, was moved to Kirjath-jearim, and stayed there until David had been reigning a long time, he sent after it, and when Uzzah, when the Ark was shaken by the oxen stumbling, reached up his hand to steady the Ark, God struck him dead. His attempt was well-meant, but it presumed that God was not able to take care of himself. It was a violation of the law for any man to touch that Ark except the ones appointed by Jehovah. Which one of the Psalms commemorates the capture and restoration of the Ark?

After twenty years Samuel led Israel to repentance and victory. I Sam. 7:3-12 tells us all about it. It says that Samuel called upon them to truly repent of their sins; if they ever wanted the favor of God any more, to cast off their idols and obey God. This is like John the Baptist saying, "Repent ye, repent ye." Every prophet, in order to be a reformer, was a preacher of repentance. The people repented of their sins, turned from their idols, and returned to God. He assembled all Israel at Mizpah; the Philistines heard of it and came with a great army. Samuel and Israel met them and smote them hip and thigh, and broke their power.

The next paragraph in the Harmony tells how Samuel judged Israel, and the regular circuit he made while living

at Ramah. He would go to Beth-el, Gilgal, and Mizpah, then come back, holding special courts of judgment, and with such wisdom, purity and impartiality that he must be classed as the last, best and greatest of the judges.

### QUESTIONS

1. Cite, in order, the passages showing Samuel's rise over against the descent of Eli.
2. What said Macaulay on this point, and what other examples cited by the author?
3. Give a summary of the events connected with the fall of the house of Eli.
4. How did the Philistines regard the capture of the Ark?
5. Show the prevalence of such conceptions in ancient times.
6. How did Jehovah show the Philistines that their victory was not over him?
7. What is the natural inquiry when an individual or a people is subject to a series of severe and extraordinary disasters?
8. To what expedients did the Philistines resort to determine whether their calamities came only in a natural way, or were supernatural afflictions connected with the Ark and coming from the offended Jehovah, and if from Jehovah, how was He to be appeased?
9. How else did Jehovah manifest the sanctity of His Ark, both at Beth-shemesh and later, as we will find in the history?
10. What Psalm commemorates the capture and restoration of the Ark?
11. How does Samuel lead Israel, after twenty years, to repentance and victory?
12. What cities did Samuel visit in his judgeship, and what can you say of the judgments rendered by him?

## IV

### THE SCHOOLS OF THE PROPHETS

#### *Scriptures: All References*

**T**HE more important passages bearing on this subject are I Sam. 3:1-4; 10:5, 9-12; 19:18-24. I Kings 18:13; 19:18, 20, 21; 20:35; II Kings 2:3-5; 4:38; 6:1; I Chron. 29:29; II Chron. 9:29; 12:15; 13:22 and other chapters in that book I do not enumerate. The last one is Amos 7:14, 15. The reader will understand that I give these instead of a prescribed section in the Harmony. These constitute the basis of this discussion.

Let us distinguish between the prophetic gift and the prophetic office, and give some examples. Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, his 70 elders, Balaam, Joshua, and others before Samuel's time had the gift, but not the office; perhaps we may except Moses as in a measure having the office. After Samuel's time, David, many of his singers, and particularly Daniel, had the gift in a high degree, but not the office. Moreover, the high priests from Aaron to Caiaphas in Christ's time, were supposed to have officially the gift of prophecy—that is, to hear and report what the Oracle said—but Samuel is the first who held the office.

The distinction between a prophet and a son of a prophet is this: A son of a prophet was a candidate for the office, ministering to the prophet, a disciple instructed by him, consecrated to the work, and qualifying himself to perform the services of the office with the highest efficiency. A prophet is one who, through inspiration of the Holy Spirit, speaks or writes for God. In this inspiration he is God's mouth

or pen, speaking or writing not his own words, but God's words. This inspiration guides and superintends his speech and his silence; what is recorded and what is omitted from the record. The gift of prophecy was not one of uniform quantity, nor necessarily enduring. The gifts were various in kind, and might be for one occasion only. As to variety of kinds, the revelation might come in dreams or open visions, or it might consist of an ecstatic trance expressed in praise or song or prayer. If praise, song or prayer, its form was apt to be poetic, particularly if accompanied by instrumental music.

As to the duration of the gift, it might be for one occasion only, or a few, or many. The Scriptures show that the spirit of prophecy came upon King Saul twice only, and each time in the form of an ecstatic trance. In his early life it came as a sign that God had chosen him as king. In his later life the object of it was to bar his harmful approach to David. Paul, in I Cor. 12 and 14 inclusive, explains the diversity of these gifts and their relative importance.

There are two periods of Hebrew history in which we find clearest notices of the schools of the prophets, the proofs of their persistence between the periods, and their influence on the nation. The notices are abundant in the time of Samuel, and in the time of Elijah and Elisha, but you have only to study the book of Chronicles to see that the prophetic order, as an office, continued through these periods and far beyond. Later you will learn that in the time of persecution fifty of these prophets were hidden in a cave and fed regularly. The object of the enemy was to destroy these theological seminaries, believing that they could never lead the nation astray while these schools of the prophets continued. Their object, therefore, was to destroy these seats of theological education. Elijah supposed that every one of them was killed except himself, but he was mistaken.

Samuel was the founder of the first school of the prophets,



and the Scripture which shows his headship is I Sam. 19:20, where Saul is sending messengers to take David, and finally goes himself and finds the school of the prophets, with Samuel as its appointed head. The reason for such a school in Samuel's time is shown, first, by an extract from "Kirkpatrick's Commentary" on I Sam., page 33. He says:

"Samuel was the founder of the prophetic order. Individuals in previous ages had been endowed with prophetic gifts, but with Samuel commenced the regular succession of prophets which lasted all through all the period of the monarchy, and did not cease until after the captivity. The degeneracy into which the priesthood had fallen through the period of the judges demanded the establishment of a new order for the religious training of the nation.

"For this purpose Samuel founded the institutions known as the schools of the prophets. The 'company of prophets' at Gibeah (I Sam. 10:10) and the scene at Ramah described in I Sam. 19:18 ff., imply a regular organization. These societies are only definitely mentioned again in connection with the history of Elijah and Elisha, but doubtless continued to exist in the interval. By means of these the Order was maintained, students were educated, and common religious exercises nurtured and developed spiritual gifts."

Kirkpatrick's is a fine commentary. The priests indeed were instructors of the people, but the tendency of the priesthood was to rest in external sacrifices, and to trust in a mere ritualistic form of sacrifice. That is the trouble always where you have a ritual. And after a while both priest and worshiper began to rely upon the external type, and on external conformity with the ritual. God needed better mouthpieces than those, hence while in the past there was a prophetic gift here and there, he now establishes the prophetic school, or society, in which training, bearing upon the prophetic office, should be continuous. The value of

these schools of the prophets is also seen from Kirkpatrick, page 34:

"The value of the prophetic order to the Jewish nation was immense. The prophets were privy-counsellors of kings, the historians of the nation, the instructors of the people. It was their function to be preachers of righteousness to rich and poor alike: to condemn idolatry in the court, oppression among the nobles, injustice among the judges, formality among the priests. They were the interpreters of the law, who drew out by degrees the spiritual significance which underlay ritual observance, and labored to prevent sacrifice and Sabbath and festival from becoming dead and unmeaning forms. Strong in the unshaken consciousness that they were expressing the divine will, they spoke and acted with a fearless courage which no threats could daunt or silence.

"Thus they proved a counterpoise to the despotism of monarchy and the formalism of priesthood. In a remarkable passage in his essay on 'Representative Government,' Mr. John Stuart Mill attributes to their influence the progress which distinguished the Jews from other Oriental nations. 'The Jews,' he writes, 'had an absolute monarchy and hierarchy. These did for them what was done for other Oriental races by their institutions—subdued them to industry and order, and gave them a national life. . . . Their religion gave existence to an inestimably precious institution, the order of prophets. Under the protection, generally though not always effectual, of their sacred character, the prophets were a power in the nation, often more than a match for kings and priests, and kept up in that little corner of the earth the antagonism of influences which is the only real security for continued progress.'"

I was surprised the first time I ever saw that statement from Mill. He was a radical evolutionist and infidel, but a statesman, and in studying the development of statesman-

ship among the nations, he saw this singular thing in the history of the Jews, unlike anything he saw anywhere else, and saw what it was that led that nation, when it went into backsliding, to repentance; what power it was that brought about the reformation when their morals were corrupted; what power it was that was the real light of the nation and the salt of the earth, and saw that it was this order of prophets which was the conservator of national unity, purity and perpetuity. I have the more pleasure in quoting that passage, as it comes from a witness in no way friendly to Christianity, just as when I was discussing missions I quoted the testimony of Charles Darwin to the tremendous influence for good wrought by the missionaries of South America.

Particularly in this case of the schools of the prophets we find their value, by noting very carefully the bearing on the case under Samuel. We have already noticed the corruption of the priesthood under Eli, Hophni and Phinehas; how the Ark was captured, the central place of worship desecrated; how Samuel, called to the office of prophet, needed assistance, and how he instituted this school of the prophets. He gathered around him the brightest young men of the nation and had the Spirit of God rest on them, and in order that their instruction might be regular he organized them into companies, or schools; he would go from one to another, and these young "theologs" were under the instruction of Samuel and for twenty years worked as evangelists in making sensitive the national conscience. It took twenty years to do it, and he could not have done it by himself, but with that tremendous power, the help he had, at the end of twenty years, he saw the nation repentant and once more worshipping God. I am for a theological seminary that will do that.

I give a modern example somewhat parallel: Mr. Spurgeon was called to the city of London, when about nine-

teen years old, to be the pastor of the old historic church of Dr. Gill, and in his evangelic preaching impressed a number of men to feel that they were also called to preach (if your preaching does not impress somebody else to preach, you may be sure that you are not called to preach), and it impressed the women and a multitude of laymen to do active Christian service. Therefore, Mr. Spurgeon organized what is called "The Pastoral College." He wouldn't let a drone be in it; he did not want anybody in it that was not spiritually minded. In other words, he insisted that a preacher should be religiously inclined, and should be ready to do any kind of work. He supported this institution largely through his own contributions, although the men and women all over England, when they saw what it was doing, would send money for its support. I used to read the monthly reports of the contributions and the list of donors that accompanied them. Mr. Spurgeon determined to work a revolution, just as Samuel did, and he used this school of the prophets for that purpose. Consequently, hundreds of young preachers belonging to that school of the prophets preached in the slums of the city, in the byways, in the highways, in the hedges, in the mines, on the wharves to the sailors, and in the hospitals. Hundreds of laymen said, "Put us to work," and he did; he had push-carts made for them, and filled them with books and so sent out over the town literature that was not poisonous. He put the women to work, and established, or rather perpetuated in better form, a number of the almshouses for the venerable old women who were poor and helpless, following out the suggestion in II Timothy, and he erected a hospital. Then they got to going further afield. They went all over England, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, crossed over into the Continent, crossed the seas to Australia, and the islands of the seas, and into heathen lands. I have always said that Spurgeon's Pastoral College came nearer to the Bible idea of a

seminary than any other in existence. There was not so much stress laid on mere scholarship as on spiritual efficiency.

It is important to note particularly what I am saying now, because it was burnt into my heart as one of the reasons for establishing a theological seminary. The nature of that society was that it was a school. They left their homes and came to stay at this school, with what we now call a mess-hall in which all the theological students, by contributing so much, have their table in common. It was that way then; they had their meals in common. In preparing dinner one day for the sons of the prophets, somebody put a lot of wild gourds into the pot, and when they began to eat it, one of them cried out: "Ah, man of God, there's death in the pot!" Once I preached a sermon on this theme: "Wild Gourds and Theological Seminaries," to show that to feed the students in theological seminaries on wild gourds of heresy is to put death in the pot; they will do more harm than good, as they will become instruments of evil.

In determining what were their duties, we must consult quite a number of passages. We gather from this passage that they were thoroughly instructed in the necessity of repentance, individually and nationally, and of turning from their sins and coming back to God with faithful obedience. That lesson was ground in them. They were taught the interpretation of the spiritual meaning of the law, all its sacrifices, its feasts, its types, and therefore when you are studying a prophet in the O. T. you will notice how different his idea of types and ceremonies from that of the priests. They will tell you that to do without eating is fasting, but the prophet will show that literal fasting is not true fasting; that there must be fasting at heart; that there must be a rending of the soul and not the garment as an expression of repentance; that to obey God is better than a formal sacrifice.



Another thing they were taught, which I wish to particularly emphasize, was music, both vocal and instrumental. In that school of the prophets started the tremendous power of music in religion so wonderfully developed by David, who got many of his ideas from associating with the schools of the prophets. And from that time unto this, every evangelical work, and all powerful religious work, has been associated with music, both in the O. T. and in the N. T.; not merely vocal, but instrumental music. The heart of a religion is expressed in its songs, and if you want to get at the heart of your O. T. you find it in the hymn-book of the Hebrew nation—the Psalter. It is indeed an interesting study to see what has been the influence of great hymns on the national life. There is an old proverb: "You may make the laws of the people, if you will let me write their ballads." Where is there a man capable of measuring the influence of "How Firm a Foundation, Ye Saints of the Lord," or "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing," or "Did Christ O'er Sinners Weep?" There is a rich literature on the influence of hymns on the life.

In the awful times of the struggle in England, Charles I against the Parliament, one faction of the nation held to ritualism, while the other followed spirituality, even to the extreme of not allowing any form, not even allowing any instruments of music. One of the finest stories of this period is the account of a church that observed the happy medium, using instrumental as well as vocal music, and congregational singing as well as the use of the choir; every Sabbath somebody's soul was melted in the power of that mighty singing.

*I can't sing myself, but I can carry the tunes in my mind, and I can be more influenced by singing than by preaching. It was singing that convicted me of sin. It was on a waving, soaring melody of song that my soul was converted.*

I once knew a rugged, one-eyed, homely, old pioneer Bap-

tist preacher, who looked like a pirate until his religion manifested itself, and then he was beautiful. I heard him one day when a telegram was put into his hand stating that his only son had just been killed by being thrown from a horse. While weeping, his face became illumined; he got up and clapped his hands and walked through that audience, singing, "O, Jesus, my Savior, to Thee I Submit."

John Bunyan wrote that song while in Bedford jail. They had put him there to keep him from preaching, and looking out through the bars of the dungeon he saw his poor blind girl, Mary, begging bread, and he sat down and wrote that hymn. The effect of the old preacher's singing John Bunyan's song was a mighty revival.

The relation of the schools of the prophets to modern theological seminaries is this: The purpose was the same. And so in N. T. times, Jesus recognized that if He wanted to revolutionize the world by evangelism He must do it with trained men. He did not insist that they be rich, great or mighty men. He did not insist that they be scholars. He called them from among the common people, and He kept them right with Him for three years and a half, and diligently instructed them in the principles and spirit of His kingdom. He taught them in a variety of forms; in parables, in proverbs, in exposition, illustrating His teachings by miracles, and in hundreds of ways in order that they might be equipped to go out and lead the world to Christ. You cannot help being impressed with this fact: That the theological seminaries in Samuel's time and in Christ's time were intensely practical, the object being not to make learned professors, but to fill each one with electricity until you could call him a "live wire," so that it burnt whoever touched it.

This is why I called Samuel a great man, and why in a previous discussion, counting the men as the peaks in a mountain range, sighting back from Samuel to Abraham,

only one other peak comes into line of vision, and that is Moses.

### QUESTIONS

1. What the more important passages bearing on the schools of the prophets?
2. Distinguish between the prophetic gift and the prophetic office and illustrate by examples.
3. Distinguish between a prophet and a son of a prophet.
4. What is the meaning of prophet?
5. In what two periods of Hebrew history do we find the clearest notices of the school of prophets, what the proofs of their persistence between these periods, and what their influence on the nation?
6. Who was the founder of the first school of the prophets?
7. What scripture shows his headship?
8. What was the reason for such school in Samuel's time?
9. What was the value of these schools of the prophets, and particularly in this case, and what illustration from modern instances?
10. What was the nature of that society, and what was the instruction given?
11. What the relation of the schools of the prophets to modern theological seminaries?

## V

### SAMUEL AND THE MONARCHY, AND HIS VINDICATION AS JUDGE

*Scriptures:* I Sam. 8:1-22; 12:1-25, Harmony  
pp. 70 and 74, 75

**I** LOGICALLY connect these two chapters so as to round up Samuel's judgeship, and the intervening chapters will be discussed later. The general subject for this discussion is, "God through Samuel establishes the monarchy, and Samuel's vindication when he gives up the position as judge." The general purpose of this chapter is to show the steps of transition from a government by judges to a government by kings. The immediate occasion of the change was the persistent demand of the people.

The grounds alleged by the people for the change were, (1) that Samuel was old; (2) that his sons whom he made judges walked not in his way, and these allegations were strictly true. Samuel was old. He had made his sons judges, as Eli had done in the case of his sons. These sons were unworthy to hold office: "They did not walk in Samuel's way, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment." Samuel had no right to make judges, nor to appoint his successor; that was Jehovah's prerogative. He had retained these sons in office, though unworthy, and had so far followed Eli's example.

*Nepotism has always been repugnant to the people.*

It was a compliment to the late Senator Coke when his kinsfolk complained that he had never gotten them an office on the score of kindred.

*Public office is a public trust, and not for distribution of family patronage.*

But their demand displeased Samuel. He did not dispute the facts alleged, nor deny their grievance against his sons, but he objected to the remedy proposed, namely: "Give us a king to judge us." It would interest us to know what Samuel would have done if they had merely demanded the removal of his sons from office and Samuel's consent to leave to God the appointment of his successor. But it is a destructive remedy to burn a ship in order to get rid of the rats. A change in the form of the government is not always the best way to get rid of unworthy officials, although the people will always demand it if from any cause the legal methods of removal are barred. The people usually are long-suffering, and often know not how to practically get rid of an evil by legal methods. Press them too far, and a revolution comes—maybe a destructive one.

Samuel evinced his wisdom by carrying the case to Jehovah in prayer; that is, before he answered the people, with the following results:

1. Jehovah shows that the plausible grounds alleged by the people for the change of government disguised their real motive. It is characteristic of fallen human nature to veil a motive in a plausible plea; for example, to defend saloons on the plea of "personal liberty," or that prohibition "injures business."

2. These people meant, by rejecting Samuel, to reject Jehovah. It was the theocracy to which in heart they objected. They wanted kings like other nations.

3. Jehovah directed Samuel to set before them plainly, in protest, the manner of a king such as other nations had; to thus force them, if they persisted in their demand, to do so with open eyes and with all of their motives unmasked. This would prove that though they had a real grievance, they were not seeking redress of that grievance, but making



it a plausible plea for the dethronement of Jehovah, even though their remedy brought grievances a thousand fold worse than those from which they pretended to seek relief.

The character of an Oriental despot is given by Samuel in his protest. Let us look at that in I Sam. 8: 11-17: "This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons and appoint them unto him, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and they shall run before his chariots; and he will appoint them unto him for captains of thousands, and captains of fifties; and he will set some to plow his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and the instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectionaries, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive-yards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put them to his work. He will take a tenth of your flocks; and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king whom ye shall have chosen you; and the Lord will not answer you in that day." I do not know anywhere in literature a better picture of an Oriental despot than is given in the language of Samuel.

The results, after Samuel showed them what it was to have a king like other nations, were as follows: (1) With their eyes open and their motives exposed, they demanded a king like other nations. (2) Jehovah directed Samuel to make them a king. "Sometimes God answers in wrath." (3) But not to establish such a monarchy as they desired, that is, like other nations, but a kingdom under a written charter which retained the theocratic idea, the earthly king to be only Jehovah's appointee and vice-gerent, subject to

Jehovah's Law, and guided in all things by Jehovah's prophets, and at all times liable to removal by Jehovah. So God does not answer their request altogether. He makes a king, but not such a king as they wanted. Concerning such a ruler Geikie uses the following language:

"Such a ruler would necessarily stand in a unique position. As only viceroy and representative of the true invisible King, Jehovah, he must be pointed out beforehand by special indications, and consecrated as to a sacred office. That he should, moreover, have commended himself to the nation by his qualities and deeds, was essential. Nor could it be permitted him to reign like other Eastern kings, by his mere pleasure; for the rights of Jehovah and those of his people, as a nation of freemen, demanded equal respect. He must, therefore, at all times, remember that he ruled under a higher King, whose will, expressed in His revealed law, was his absolute guide both in religion and ordinary life; its transgression, in any particular, being self-destruction. But such a man would necessarily be in loving sympathy with Him under whom he held his authority, to be king after His heart; a man truly religious; obeying, not by mere outward constraint, but from loving choice.

"Though nominally king, it was a condition of his rule that he acted only as the prophet instructed him. Under the strange theocratic constitution enforced by Samuel, he was in fact only a puppet, moved by the prophet as he chose, and forbidden to act in anything as a free agent. The only counterpart to such a state of things in modern times, was the titular rule of the Mikado in Japan, side by side with the real Emperor, the Tycoon; the one a shadow king, the other the actual sovereign power. In antiquity, strange to say, we find parallel to Saul and Samuel among the Getae of the century before Christ. In their wild home north and south of the Danube, that people were ruled by a chief who acted only as the servant of a holy man, without whom he

was not allowed to act in anything whatever. Still stranger, the result of this extraordinary custom was the same as followed the rule of Samuel in Israel. From the lowest weakness and moral degeneracy the Getae roused themselves under the leading of the holy man and the phantom king, to a thorough and lasting reformation. Indeed, they so turned themselves to a nobler life that their national vigor showed itself in a puritanical strictness and steadfast bravery, which carried their banners far and wide over new territories, till their kingdom was infinitely extended. Once recognized, such a complete subordination to the representative of the theocracy as was demanded from Saul might become more easy to be borne, but in its early years the strong, valiant warrior must have been sorely tried by finding himself king in name, but in fact absolutely subordinate in the most minute detail to the command of Samuel."

Using the word, "puppet," Geikie is mistaken, since the prophet never spoke except as God commanded, and for a man to rule under the direction of God does not make him a puppet. This kind of a kingdom was not repugnant to Jehovah's plan, as set forth in their previous history and law, and in their subsequent history.

1. In Gen. 17:16, in the covenant which God made with Abraham, He promised that kings should be his descendants.

2. In Deut. 17:14-20: "When thou art come unto the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around about me; thou shalt surely set him king over thee, whom Jehovah thy God shall choose: one from among the brethren shalt thou set king over thee; thou mayest not put a foreigner over thee, which is not thy brother. Only he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he may multiply horses; forasmuch

as Jehovah hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way. Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold. And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write a copy of this law in a book, out of that which is before the priests and the Levites: and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life; that he may learn to fear Jehovah his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them; that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left; to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children, in the midst of Israel."

We can tell whether kings of later date did this, for we remember that Solomon took only seven hundred wives, besides three hundred concubines. Every king, in their subsequent history, who violated this kingdom charter, or who refused to hear and obey Jehovah's prophet, was punished by Jehovah. And to the extent that when one of them respected this charter, he was blessed of Jehovah, he and the people with him.

Thus it is evident that the issue was not whether the ruler should be called judge or king, but that Jehovah ruled, whatever the title of His earthly subordinate. The lesson is a mighty one. Jehovah is King of kings and Lord of lords. His law and authority are paramount over nations as well as over individuals. His government extends over the unwilling as well as the willing. To deny His rule is not to vacate responsibility to His judgment. That is was immaterial whether the ruler was called judge or king, is illustrated by a relative passage from Pope's "Essay on Man." The third epistle of that essay, line 303, says:

"For forms of government let fools contest;  
Whate'er is best administered is best."

It is further evidenced that the people had to see and admit their wrong in seeking to displace Samuel as judge in I Sam. 12:1-25 which gives Samuel's address and contains the following points:

1. They had to bear witness and have the testimony recorded, to the wisdom, purity, and fidelity of Samuel's administration when he retired from the judgeship.

2. They had to admit that all great leaders in the past were appointed by Jehovah, and that they had rebelled against every one of them.

3. They had to accept this alternative, with a king put over them; that is, if they and their king submitted to Jehovah's rule according to the kingdom charter, then well; but if they turned away from Him, then condign punishment came on them as on their rebellious fathers.

4. They had still to submit to Samuel as a prophet. The words of Samuel were confirmed by this miracle: He called their attention to the fact that it was harvest time, when in ordinary cases it never rained. Then lifting his face, he spoke to Jehovah for a sign, and instantly the heavens were blackened, loud thunder rolled, lightning gored the black bosom of the cloud, and a windstorm came up to testify that God was speaking to them. The result was that they felt and confessed the sin of their demand, and implored Samuel's intercession that they might be forgiven, to which he gave the following in reply:

1. He encouraged them not to despair on account of their sins—that God was merciful—but to repent and do better in the future.

2. That God, for His own name's sake, would never forsake that people.

3. That he himself would not sin by ceasing to pray for them that their sins should be forgiven.

4. That he would, as prophet, continue to instruct them in the good and right way.



5. That in view of the great things that God had done for them, they should fear Him and serve Him in truth with all their hearts; otherwise they would be consumed.

With other great events in their history, chapter 12 may be compared thus:

1. With the farewell address of Moses, Deut. 29:1—31:5;

2. Joshua's farewell address, Joshua 24:1-28;

3. Paul's farewell address to the elders of the church at Ephesus, Acts 20:18-38.

4. On the score of patriotism, we may include Washington's farewell address, when he announced he would no more be president. I once went to the city of Annapolis to see a great picture, or painting, representing the scene of Washington tendering his sword back to congress at the close of the war, retiring from the office of commander-in-chief. It is a marvelous painting. Supposed but far-distant relatives of mine are in the picture—Charles Carroll and his daughters. In a glass case to the right is the very suit of clothes Washington wore on that day, including his spurs. My old teacher made me memorize Washington's farewell address.

Two great doctrines in Samuel's address need to be emphasized:

1. The ground of God's not forsaking His elect nation: "Not on your account, but for His own name's sake," and in this connection you must read Ezekiel 36:22-36, and the whole of Romans 11. They both talk about God's saving in one day the whole Jewish nation.

2. It is a sin not to pray for the forgiveness of sinners, of which the following is a Texas illustration: There was a certain man, preaching in many counties, taking the position that no Christian was justifiable in praying for the forgiveness of the sinner. I joined issue publicly, in the pulpit and in the press, citing Samuel's doctrine: "God for-

bid that I should sin in ceasing to pray for the forgiveness of your sins." In that great discussion I referred to what is called the "mourner's bench," stating that I had no particular fancy for what is called the "mourner's bench;" that a man could find Christ on the bench, on the floor, behind the barn, or in the field, unless he made this point: "I will do anything that God wants me to do to be saved, except a certain thing;" that if he reserved any one point on which he would not surrender to God, then he did not surrender at all; and I insisted that in leaving out the "mourner's bench" they would not leave out the mourning. I did not object to leaving out the bench if they wanted to, but if they did leave it out, I hoped they would not cease praying for sinners.

## QUESTIONS

1. What the general purpose of this chapter?
2. What the immediate occasion of the change?
3. What the grounds alleged by the people for the change?
4. What can you say of these allegations?
5. Why, then, did their demand displease Samuel?
6. In what did Samuel evince his wisdom?
7. What the results?
8. Describe the character of an Oriental despot as given in Samuel's protest.
9. What were the results after Samuel showed them what it was to have a king like other nations?
10. Prove that this kind of a kingdom was not repugnant to Jehovah's plan, as set forth in their previous history and law, and in their subsequent history.
11. If then it was immaterial whether the ruler was called judge or king, cite a relative passage from Pope's "Essay on Man."
12. What further evidence that the people had to see and admit their wrong in seeking to displace Samuel as judge?
13. How were the words of Samuel confirmed?
14. What was the result?
15. Analyze Samuel's reply.
16. With what other great events in their history may chapter 12 be compared?
17. What two great doctrines in Samuel's address need to be emphasized?
18. What Texas illustration of the second doctrine?

## VI

### SAUL, THE FIRST KING

*Scriptures:* References in Harmony, pp. 70-74, and other references

**I** DEVOTE an extended discussion to chapters 8 to 12 because it is necessary to fix clearly in the mind the nature of the kingdom established in order to interpret correctly the history of the kings which follows. Without this understanding we will break down in the interpretation of even the first rejection of Saul, and with Jehovah's dealing with every subsequent king. Before entering upon the history of the first king, let us restate tersely the salient points which define the Hebrew monarchy:

1. A government by kings was not an afterthought with Jehovah, but was one of the predetermined stages of the national development and a forecast preparatory to the setting up of the Messianic spiritual kingdom.

2. Though Jehovah granted Israel's demand for a kingly government superseding the previous rule by judges, he did not establish such a monarchy as they desired, like that of other nations.

3. The kingdom established had a written charter clearly defining its nature, powers, and limitations, the basis of which was given to Moses (Deut. 17: 14-20) with subsequent enlargements by Samuel. This charter made the written law, the Pentateuch, the constitution of the kingdom. The king must make the law his *Vade Mecum*, and the rule of his reign. There was not only this unalterable written constitution, but to emphasize the retention of the

theocratic idea, the king must at all times hear and obey the fresh messages from Jehovah, coming through His now established order of the prophets, His mouthpieces and penmen. This part of the charter turns a blaze of light on the subsequent history.

4. The monarchy was not elective by the nation, through corporate action of their great congregation or general assembly, but each king must be appointed by Jehovah, and that appointment designated through the prophet, Jehovah's mouthpiece. Jehovah chooses the king, Jehovah's prophet anoints him and presents him to the assembly for acceptance.

5. The monarchy was not hereditary in the modern sense. A dynasty might be changed at Jehovah's sole option, as from the house of Saul to the house of David, and it did not follow that when a king's son succeeded him that he should be the first-born; for example, the case of Solomon. Whether in changing a dynasty, or designating which son of a king should succeed his father, the living prophet was Jehovah's medium of making known His will.

6. Neither king nor general assembly, nor both co-joined, had the power to declare war, direct it when declared, make peace, or contract alliances, except as Jehovah directed through His living prophet.

7. By the law, and through the living prophet, the people were safeguarded from the tyranny of the king. See the case of Nathan's rebuke of David for the wrong against Uriah, and Elijah's denunciation of Ahab concerning Naboth's vineyard.

8. Particularly, the prophet spoke with all authority from God in matters of religion, hedging not only against idolatry but reliance upon formalism and ritualism, all the time bringing out the spiritual meaning of the law and calling for repentance and reformation. Therefore, no man can interpret any part of the mere history of the Hebrew monarchy apart from the section of the Psalter bearing

on it, and the contemporaneous prophets. On this account Wood's "Hebrew Monarchy," though not perfect in its arrangement, excels "Crockett's Harmony" as a textbook.

A quotation from a prophet pertinent to the establishment of the monarchy considered in the preceding chapter is Hosea 13:9-11: "It is thy destruction, O Israel, that thou art against me, against thy help. Where now is thy king, that he may save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges, of whom thou saidst, Give me a king and princes? I have given thee a king in mine anger, and have taken him away in my wrath."

There were several ways by which the people, as well as the king, could get at the will of Jehovah apart from the written law, viz.:

1. By submitting a question to the Oracle abiding in the Ark, to be answered by the high priest, wearing his ephod, through the Urim and Thummim, I Sam. 23:8-12.

2. By appealing to the prophets, I Sam. 9:6-9.

3. By sacrifice and asking of signs; as in the case of Gideon, Judges 6:17-21.

There are two passages, one showing the despair of an individual, and the other showing the deplorable condition of the nation, from whom, on account of aggravated sins, God has cut off all means of communication with Him. In one, Saul, the first king, in his later life thus bemoans his condition: "And when Saul saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart trembled greatly. And when Saul inquired of Jehovah, Jehovah answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets," I Sam. 28:5. In the other, Hosea thus describes the pitiable condition of the rebellious Israel: "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king, and without prince, and without sacrifice, and without pillar, and without Ephod or teraphim," Hosea 3:4.



## SAUL, THE FIRST KING

Certain passages bear on part of the foregoing statement of the nature of the kingdom. For instance, Jehovah chose Saul to be the king, privately announcing him to His prophet, and providentially bringing him in touch with this prophet (I Sam. 9:15) and later before the great Assembly at Mizpah He makes known His choice to the people publicly (I Sam. 10:17-21). Acting under Jehovah's direction, the prophet prepares the mind of Saul for the high honor (I Sam. 9:20-25). Then privately the prophet accounts him as king, and then confirms to him his position by signs (10:2-7). Then by an induement of the Holy Spirit he is qualified for his office. Not converted, but qualified for his office. Then the prophet brings about the public designation before the people, the general assembly at Mizpah (I Sam. 10:17-21). Then the prophet arranges for his recognition by the people in a subsequent general assembly at Gilgal (Sam. 10:8 and 11:14, 15). Then the prophet vacates his own office of judge, I Sam. 12.

It is easy to see from the text the details of which I need not give, just what Jehovah does, just what the prophet does, just what the people do, just what Saul does, and particularly the text shows how Jehovah prepares the people to accept Saul—prepares the prophet first, then prepares Saul and then the people.

The several stages showing the preparation of Saul are intensely interesting. The first hint which Samuel gives to Saul seemed to him an incredible thing, for he says, "I belong to the smallest tribe, and our family is a subordinate one in that tribe." But still, it puts him to thinking. Then Samuel gives him the post of honor in entertaining, and that puts him to thinking. Then Samuel privately anoints him as king, and that ceremony impresses him. Then Samuel predicts three signs, the object of which is to satisfy

Saul thoroughly and to confirm the kingship in his own mind; and particularly the last of the three, which was that the Spirit of God would come upon him in the gift of prophesying, and he would be changed into another man.

Note Saul's reticence: First, when his uncle asks him where he had been, and he tells him about the prophet's informing him that the asses have been found, but does not say a word about the kingship; again, when after he is publicly designated and some of the evil-minded people, children of Belial, declared that they could not accept him as king, because they saw no salvation in him, instead of getting mad and answering in resentful language, Saul holds his peace. He never says a word; he knows how to wait. Again, we notice that notwithstanding all the things that have occurred so far, when at that great gathering at Mizpah where he was to be publicly shown as king, Saul hides, and when the question comes up and when the lot determined Saul as king, they ask where he is, and God said, "He is hiding among the stuff"—the baggage.

I once preached a sermon from that text on God's discovering a number of appointed men hiding with the stuff, more concerned about their farming and the things of the world than about the preaching of His Word. In the army every soldier thought it disgraceful if he had to stay with the baggage when the battle came on. Since he could be pointed at as the soldier who had to stay with the stuff, he wanted to be on the firing line.

I am showing you all these things to mark the progress in Saul's own mind, and God's leading him step by step. After a while he is wide awake enough for the kingly honor.

Now let us consider the meaning of apostasy, what is essential in a particular case to prove the doctrine, and what the application to Saul, and explain I Sam. 10:5, 6, 10:9, 10. Apostasy means that a regenerated man may be finally and forever lost. In order to prove that doctrine by

a particular case, the evidence must be indubitable on two points: First, that in the case selected there was first regeneration, and second, that this regenerated one was finally and forever lost. The proof must be ample and unequivocal at both ends—regeneration and damnation.

On these premises, we examine the particular case of Saul, King of Israel. A failure of demonstration that he was a regenerated man, or that he was finally lost, deprives the doctrine of apostasy, as defined above, from any support from the particular case of Saul. If the proof fall short at either point, there is no need to consider the other. Therefore, let us shorten matters by attention to one point only: Was Saul a regenerated man? In the case under consideration, the passages relied upon to establish the contention that Saul was a truly regenerated man, a spiritual child of God, are:

First, Samuel's promise, I Sam. 10:5, 6: "Thou shalt be turned into another man."

Second, the historian's declaration of the fulfillment of the promise, I Sam. 10:9, 10: "God gave him another heart." A careful examination of both passages (American Standard Revision) settles conclusively that in the promise, the Holy Spirit would in some sense come upon Saul, with the result that he would be changed into another man, and that in the fulfillment, the Holy Spirit did come upon him in the sense promised, with the result that God gave him another heart. If we accept the record, there is no doubt here that the Holy Spirit exerted a power on Saul and that consequently there was a change in him.

The questions to be determined are: What the nature of the power exerted, and of the resultant change? My answer is that the Spirit-power promised was the gift of prophesying, which throughout the scriptures is distinguished from the grace of regeneration, and the change was according to the power, and that the end, or purpose, exercised was not

to regenerate Saul, but is expressly called a sign, to assure Saul's doubting mind that Jehovah had chosen him as king. The incredible thing to Saul, which needed confirmation by signs, was not that he would become a child of God by regeneration, but that he whose tribe was so small, and the position of whose family in that tribe was so low, should be chosen of Jehovah to be king of all Israel. The nature of the power exerted and the resultant change effected are thus determined by their purpose.

The difference between the grace of regeneration and the miraculous gift of the Spirit is expressed thus: The grace of regeneration is not a sign, but the miraculous gift of the Spirit *is* a sign, and is so regarded in both Testaments. In the same way, the gift of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost was not to regenerate the apostles, all of whom but Judas were already Christians, but to assure their hearts, and, as signs, to accredit them to others.

In I Cor. 12-14 the whole matter is laid bare so that a child can understand it. Very sharply, and at many points, does Paul contrast these miraculous and temporary endowments of the Spirit, given for signs, with the grace of regeneration expressed in the abiding fruits of faith, hope and love. Regeneration is one thing in all cases. The miraculous gifts of the Spirit were diverse. One of the recipients, like Saul, might prophesy, another work miracles, another speak with tongues, another interpret tongues.

The Spirit-power received on Pentecost did change the apostles; did, in an important sense, give them other hearts, as we may learn from the coward, Peter, trembling before a maidservant, and the Peter, bold as a lion, on Pentecost.

In the Corinthian discussion (I Cor. 12:14) Paul makes clear, first, that faith, hope and love, the evidences and fruits of regeneration, are superior in nature and more edifying in exercise than the gifts of the Spirit, one of which only Saul had; second, that all these signs would cease, but that

regeneration, evidenced by faith, hope and love, would abide.

If we look for evidences of regeneration in Saul's life, we do not find them. If we look for evidences of a miraculous Spirit-gift bestowed on him for assurance to him that Jehovah wanted him to be king, and for a sign to others, we do find them, and we also find that this gift of the Spirit was withdrawn from him when becoming unworthy of office, Jehovah no longer wants him as king. But, perhaps, the strongest evidence in the Bible that Saul was not a regenerated man is to be found in God's contrast between Saul and Solomon on this very point (see Revised Version of II Sam. 7:13-16 and I Chron. 17:11-13). Here it is unequivocally taught that Saul was not a regenerated man, but Solomon was. The regeneration of Solomon, as contrasted with Saul, appears in this:

1. God was Solomon's spiritual Father, and Solomon was God's spiritual son.

2. Therefore, when he sinned, Solomon was chastised as a child and not as an alien.

3. Being a child, God's loving kindness would not be withdrawn, as in the case of Saul.

Old John Bunyan was accustomed to say, "Gifts make a preacher, but grace makes a Christian." Saul had the gift, but not the grace. To this already unanswerable argument we may add that a miraculous, because supernatural, gift may be bestowed by the devil, who in no case can regenerate. This power of Satan can of course be exercised only through God's permission, and this permission is never granted except to test men, or as a punitive judgment on men who refuse to be guided by the Holy Spirit.

In Saul's own case, this permission was granted, as we see from the result being as before, that Saul prophesied. Read the passage and see. Later we will find a similar case. The New Testament explains the ground of this permission



thus (see II Thess. 2:8-13): "And then shall be revealed the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus shall slay with the breath of His mouth, and bring to naught by the manifestation of His coming, even he whose coming is according to the working of Satan, with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceit of unrighteousness for them that perish, because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved. And for this cause, God sendeth them a working of error, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, for that God chose you from the beginning unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."

And it is precisely on this account that John says (John 4:1), "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but prove the spirits, whether they be of God, because many false prophets are gone out into the world." No miracle can accredit a doctrine contrary to the written Word.

To make evident the application of this line of argument to Saul's case, we are assured that these miracles, signs and wonders, wrought by Satan and his demons, no matter how plausible nor how convincing to their dupes, can never possibly deceive the elect (see Mark 13:22 and Matt. 24:24). But the evil spirit's miracle causing Saul to prophesy (I Sam. 16:14 and 18:10) did deceive him and straightway led him to seek the murder of David, led him to the slaughter of the priests of Nob (22:9-19), and led him to irretrievable ruin, despair and suicide.

### QUESTIONS

1. Why devote any extended discussion to chapters 8 to 12?
2. Even now, before entering upon the history of the first king, restate tersely the salient points which define the Hebrew monarchy.
3. Cite a quotation from a prophet pertinent to the establishment of the monarchy considered in the preceding chapter.

4. In what ways could the people, as well as the king, get at the will of Jehovah apart from the written law?

5. Cite two passages, one showing the despair of the individual, and the other showing the deplorable condition of the nation, from whom on account of aggravated sins, God has cut off all means of communication with Him.

6. Cite, in order, certain passages bearing on part of the foregoing statement of the nature of the kingdom.

7. What did Jehovah do, what did the prophet do, what did the people do, and what did Saul do to prepare the people to accept Saul?

8. Describe Saul's reticence in accepting this high position of honor.

9. What is the meaning of apostasy, what is the essential feature in a particular case to prove the doctrine, and what the application to Saul, explaining I Sam. 10: 5, 6; 10: 9, 10?

10. What is the difference between the grace of regeneration and the miraculous gift of the Spirit? Illustrate by New Testament instances.

11. What, then, do we find in Saul's life, and what the strongest evidence in the Bible that he was not regenerated?

12. What was Bunyan's saying, and what added argument?

13. What is the purpose of God's permission of the devil to bestow miraculous gifts, and what New Testament testimony?

14. What the difference in effect of these miracles of the devil on the saved and the unsaved, and how does Saul's case illustrate?

## VII

### SAUL, THE FIRST KING

(Continued)

*Scriptures:* Same as in preceding chapter

**I**T is contended by some that the reference to Saul's "another heart" is equivalent to the "new heart" of Ezek. 36:26, to which we may safely reply that the "another heart" given to Saul was not equivalent to the passage cited in Ezekiel. But when we come to Saul's death, in the history, to sum up his character, we will not be able to classify him with Judas, though there are some points similar, particularly in that both were led by a dominant evil spirit to despair and self-destruction. Saul, in many ways, was a finer man than Judas, leaving behind precious memories of some deeds and traits which evoked the gratitude of the men of Jabesh-gilead, the unswerving attachment of several tribes, and the beautiful eulogy of David. Nothing like these do we find in the low, avaricious, treacherous life of Judas.

Believers in apostasy use the life of Saul to prove apostasy, and I do not wonder that they take this case as the basis of their argument to sustain the doctrine of apostasy, since it is the most plausible in the Bible, but if this case fails in demonstration they may not hope for support in any other. But they may ask, "What then does Paul mean in Gal. 5:4: 'Ye are fallen away from grace?'" To which we again reply that the scriptural phrase, "Ye are fallen away from grace," as used by Paul in Gal. 5:4, does not

imply that real Christians, the truly regenerate, may be finally lost, but that those once accepting the doctrine of salvation by grace, and then returning to a doctrine of salvation by works, have fallen away from grace. They have turned from one doctrine to the opposite one, as often happens in practical life, without meaning that either the original acceptance was regeneration, or the falling away from it was final. In Paul's meaning of the phrase, men may fall from grace.

We have now seen how Jehovah prepared His prophet for designation of Saul as king, how He prepared Saul for the great honor, and how He prepared the people to accept Saul. Before advancing in the history, we need to understand more particularly certain matters in the record already so tersely covered, particularly the steps of the people's preparation to accept Saul, and how gradually the acceptance was, in a glorious climax, made complete:

1. The gift of prophesying came upon Saul, enduing him for service, and this being in the company of the school of the prophets, prepared the mighty prophetic order to recognize him as God's man. As this enduement of power came on him also in the presence of many of the people, it was designed to accredit him to them. But they were more startled by the prodigy than they were made ready to accept him. There is something scornful in their saying, which became a proverb: "Is Saul also among the prophets?" Their scorn is somewhat mitigated by a bystander's question: "Who is their father?" meaning, "What in their descent puts the prophets above Saul that you should wonder at the bestowal on him of the prophetic gift?" God bestowed it, and not on account of family position.

2. Jehovah's choice of him by an extraordinary method in the great congregation at Mizpah as the man for the place out of all Israel. As this method of showing divine selection had availed in Joshua's time in infallibly point-

ing out Achan, the one criminal out of millions (Joshua 7:14-18), and would again avail in David's time (I Sam. 16:12), it ought to have been equally convincing in showing Jehovah's choice of a king. It did convince most of the people, who shouted their acceptance in a phrase that has gone round the world: "God save the King!" But not all were satisfied, for certain sons of Belial said, "How shall this man save us?" And they despised him and brought no present. You must note that the phrase, "sons of Belial," retains the meaning already established (I Sam. 1:16; 2:12). Belial is a proper name, meaning the devil, and quite in keeping with their nature, the devil's children will not accept Jehovah's choice of a king.

3. The spirit of Jehovah comes upon Saul and demonstrates his fitness for the high honor by leading to the deliverance of Jabesh-gilead. It is not enough to shout, "God save the king," but will you fall in line and follow the king? In his call to war, Saul rightly associates his name with Samuel's (I Sam. 11:7) and "the dread of the Lord fell on all the people, and they came out as one man."

This practical demonstration of Saul's fitness wrought unanimity in his acceptance, and led the people to demand of Samuel the death of those who had refused Jehovah's choice, Saul's wisdom again appearing in refusing to stain the glorious beginning of his reign with the blood of political executions.

4. The people now being prepared in mind to accept Jehovah's choice, under divine direction, they were formally and officially committed by the ratification at Gilgal in solemn assembly, with appropriate sacrifices, and great rejoicing of both king and people, followed by Samuel's surrender of the office of judge. This meeting at Gilgal is the dividing official line of separation between the period of the judges and the period of the monarchy.

Before, we have only shown the steps toward transition.



The scene of the consummation was most fitting, for at Gilgal the period of the pilgrimage ended and the period of the conquest commenced, and at Gilgal the distribution of a part of the land took place officially, ending, in part, the conquest period of the judges.

5. Jehovah, king, prophet, and general assembly are in full accord, the functions of all clearly distinguished and defined. Happy beginning of the monarchy! The later history will show wherein, when, and how the glorious charter of the kingdom is violated by prophet, king or people. We will find a sad history, enlivened here and there by deeds of heroes and song of bards. But the picture will gather deepening shadows until the eclipse is completed by the downfall of the monarchy. The chief heroes will be the prophets, a few kings will be illustrious, and very rarely, a priest.

The distinction in the meaning of the words "seer" and "prophet," used as synonymous in I Sam. 9:7, is this: "Prophet" has the larger meaning, including all the import of "seer." Strictly speaking, the word "seer" refers only to one method of receiving revelation, *i.e.*, in vision. A prophet not only had the gift of vision, but was in all respects the mouthpiece, or penman, of Jehovah in teaching, reforming, or recording. He was by inspiration God's direct legatee, ambassador, or representative, with authority above king or people.

There is a humorous play on the common version of I Sam. 10:14 which a deacon once made to an indiscreet preacher, saying, "My dear sir, if you keep on shooting off your mouth half-cocked, you will presently find yourself where Saul perceived his father's asses to be." The words of the text in that version are: "We saw they were nowhere."

## SAUL'S REIGN AFTER THE RATIFICATION IN GILGAL

I Sam. 13:1 says, "Saul was forty years old when he began to reign, and when he had reigned two years over Israel, Saul chose him three thousand men of Israel," etc. His personal appearance is described in I Sam. 10:23, 24: "From his shoulders upward he was higher than the people. None of them were like him." Hence the proverb: "Head and shoulders above his fellows." We will find later that his armour was too large for David. The conditions of his reign were hard. At this time Israel was dominated by the Philistines on the Southwest, assailed by Amalek on the South, by Ammon, Moab and Edom on the Southeast, and by Zobah, or Syria, on the Northeast, but against all these at times Saul waged a victorious war. Besides this his resources were limited. He had no standing army, no arms, no equipment, no public treasury except spoils gathered in battle, and the whole country was impoverished by raids and invasions of his many enemies. I Sam. 13:19-23 shows the pitiable condition of the people as to artificers, implements of industry and arms: "Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel; for the Philistines said, Lest the Hebrews make them swords or spears: But all the Israelites went down to the Philistines, to sharpen every man his share, and his coulter, and his axe, and his mattock; yet they had a file for the mattocks, and for the coulters, and for the forks, and for the axes, and to set the goads. So it came to pass in the day of battle, that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of the people that were with Saul and Jonathan; but with Saul and with Jonathan his son was there found." This statement has its great lessons.

No people can become or remain safe and prosperous who are dependent on other nations for mechanics, manufactured goods, and their means of transportation. This

was illustrated in the great controversy and war between the States. During the controversy there appeared a book by a renegade North Carolinian, entitled: "Helper's Impending Crisis," in which he thus pictured the South's unpreparedness for war, and the certain disasters which would, in the case of war, necessarily overtake it. I never read it but one time, and that was when I was a child, but it was burnt into my mind so that I can repeat it now:

"A Southern man gets up in the morning from between Northern sheets, having slept on a Northern mattress, resting on a Northern bedstead, washes his face in a Northern bowl, dries his face on a Northern towel, brushes his hair and teeth with Northern brushes, puts on Northern clothes; goes into his dining room and sits down at a Northern dining table covered by a Northern table-cloth, on which are Northern cups, saucers, plates, knives, forks, and in a Southern hog-country eats Northern bacon. Then he goes out and hitches his horse to a Northern plow; or to a Northern buggy; or having tied around his neck a Northern cravat, he goes to pay his address to his girl, who is dressed in Northern dimity and calicoes, and when he comes to die, he is wrapped in a Northern shroud, his grave is dug with a Northern spade and mattock, and the only thing he has which is Southern is the hole in the ground where he is buried."

Now, as a consequence, just as soon as the war broke out, having no factories, having no railroads running east and west, having no control of the land and water transportation, in six months we were on the verge of starvation. I saw several companies of Sibley's brigade start to New Mexico armed with lances—old-fashioned lances, a long, dressed pole with a rude point to it. They took the old-fashioned flint and steel muskets, and fixed them so they could use percussion caps; they did not have a breech-loading gun. Having no paper factories, the newspapers

were being printed within six months on wall-paper—the printing on one side and coloring on the other. I paid \$22 in Mexican silver for a hatful of coffee that was smuggled over from Mexico (I could not bear to see my mother do without coffee), but all over the South they were drinking parched sweet potatoes for coffee, and using sassafras tea, and catnip tea, and when they were sick they used boneset tea, and woe to the man who had to take it!

*If all this is true among nations, you can understand what I meant when I said woe to the South, where the people have the views of sound doctrine, when it sends its preaching implements to a Northern radical-critic grindstone in order to put on point or edge. I tell you, we ought never to cease praying that God will bless our Southwestern Seminary, and establish it in the hearts of the people.*

From a comparison of chap. 13:1, 2, and 14:47-52 we must suppose:

1. That the text of 13:1 is defective. Note the difference in the rendering between the common version and the revised version—a very considerable difference.

2. That according to the summary given in 14:47-52, there is no record of the details of many of Saul's campaigns.

3. As Saul was a young man when made king, and now comes before us with a grown son, Jonathan, already a hero, we must suppose that for years after he became king his reign was prosperous, and according to the charter of the kingdom. In this prosperous part of his reign must always be placed to Saul's credit the fact that under the most trying conditions he proved himself a great hero in war against mighty odds, while possessing amiable characteristics which endeared him to his family, to the people and to Samuel. According to David's eulogy he found the women of his people in rags and clothed them in scarlet, and put on their apparel ornaments of gold. He taught an

unwarlike, undisciplined militia to become mighty warriors. His whole life was one series of battles, beating back the enemies who were pouring in on every side. Then considering these odds against him, his only hope lay in strict obedience to the charter of his kingdom, thus keeping Jehovah as his friend. He never began to fall until he made God his enemy.

### QUESTIONS

1. Is the reference to Saul's "another heart" equivalent to the "new heart" of Ezek. 36:26? In what was Saul like Judas, and in what was he unlike him?
2. Why do believers in apostasy use the life of Saul to prove apostasy?
3. What does Paul mean in Gal. 5:4: "Ye are fallen away from grace?"
4. What, particularly, were the steps of the people's preparation to accept Saul, and how gradually was the acceptance, in glorious climax, made complete?
5. Distinguish in meaning the words "seer" and "prophet," used as synonymous in I Sam. 9:7.
6. What humorous play on the common version of I Sam. 10:14 did a deacon once make to an indiscreet preacher?
7. How old was Saul when he began to reign?
8. What was his personal appearance?
9. What were the hard conditions of his reign?
10. What his limited resources?
11. Recite the passage that shows the pitiable condition of the people as to artificers, implements of industry and arms.
12. What great lessons are derivable from this statement?
13. What must we suppose from a comparison of chap. 13:1, 2, and 14:47-52?
14. In this prosperous part of his reign, what must always be placed to Saul's credit?
15. Considering these odds against him, wherein lay his only hope?



## VIII

### THE PASSING OF SAUL AND HIS DYNASTY

*Scriptures: References in Harmony, pp. 75-79*

THESE are real difficulties, puzzling to a Bible student, in I Samuel, 13 and 14. These difficulties are of three kinds: first, in the text; second, in the order of events; third, in determining the length of Saul's reign. The first difficulty of the text is in the first sentence, 13:1. According to the historian's formula elsewhere, introducing the account of a reign, we would naturally expect this initial sentence to tell us two facts: Saul's age when he began to reign, and the duration of his reign, somewhat thus: "Saul was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned over Israel forty years," but our present Hebrew text cannot be so rendered, nor can we satisfactorily make out the text from a comparison with the versions. The Hebrews designated numbers by letters, hence it is quite easy in the matter of numbers for a mistake to creep in. In the Hebrew of 13:1 Saul's age is not stated. When the versions attempt to supply the number from internal evidence, it amounts only to conjecture. The unrevised Septuagint omits that first verse altogether, but a revision of that version gives it, and makes it read that Saul was thirty years old when he began to reign. The American Standard Revision fills the blank with forty years as his age when he began to reign, and connects verse 1 with verse 2. The Jew, Isaac Leeser, in his English version, renders that first verse thus: "When Saul had reigned one year—and two years he reigned over Israel," which leaves

the whole verse "up in the air," with two gaps in it. Other Jews render it thus: "Saul was the son of a year when he began to reign, and when he had reigned two years he chose for himself, etc." This rendering could be made to mean that Saul was as inexperienced, or as simple, as a year-old child when he commenced to reign, but after he had reigned two years he began to assume the air of royalty by organizing a small standing army as a bodyguard, or as a nucleus around which militia levies could be assembled in time of war. In the judgment of the author, there is no direct connection between verse 1 and verse 2, nor is he able to remove the difficulty. It seems probable that that first sentence should follow the usual formula of the historian, and that if we had the true text, it would so appear.

The second text-difficulty is in 13:5, which gives the Philistines "thirty thousand chariots," a number of chariots which seems to be so incredible, so unnecessary, and so wholly out of proportion to other departments of their army, that one is disposed to imagine that some copyist erred in writing the Hebrew letters by which they express the number of chariots. Probably the number was one thousand.

The third text-difficulty is the word, "Ark," in 14:18. We would naturally conclude from I Sam. 7:1, 2, and from I Chron. 13:1-14 that the Ark remained at Kirjath-jearim until its removal to Jerusalem by David. Moreover, David says expressly, "We sought not unto the Ark in the days of Saul." The best explanation of this difficulty is that the Septuagint, with a better Hebrew text before it, renders the verse thus: "And Saul said to Ahijah, Bring hither the Ephod. For he wore the Ephod at that time before Israel."

In determining the order of events we find that the paragraph, I Sam. 14:47-52, gives a summary of Saul's wars and of his family, and inasmuch as the historian gives no details of at least three of these wars, towit: the war with

Ammon, with Edom and with the kings of Zobah, *i.e.*, Syria, the difficulty is to know just where these wars should be placed. Evidently there is no place for them after the beginning of this section, and if they be put before this section, then time must be allowed for them, as well as for the arrival to mature age of Saul's sons and daughters.

In determining the duration of Saul's reign, the difficulty in the Hebrew text of 13:1 forces us to rely upon one statement only, that by the Apostle Paul, Acts 13:21, who says: "Saul reigned by the space of forty years." In an edited edition of Josephus' "Antiquity of the Jews," Book VI, last sentence of that book, the reading is: "Now Saul, when he had reigned eighteen years while Samuel was alive, and after his death 2 [and 20], ended his life in this manner." The words "and 20" in brackets must be regarded as an interpolation, being out of harmony with the author's heading of the sixth book, which assigns only thirty-two years from the death of Eli to the death of Saul. Leaving out the bracketed words, Josephus says that Saul reigned 18 years while Samuel lived, and two years after he died. The author stands by Paul's statement that he reigned by the space of forty years, and contends that this harmonizes best with all of the elements of the history. The history unquestionably makes Saul a young man when he began to reign. There must be time for all of the wars mentioned in the summary, 14:47-52, and for Saul's children, sons and daughters, to become grown. This 13th chapter presents Jonathan a grown man and a valorous captain. Therefore the author assumes that between chapters 12, when Saul's reign properly commenced, and 13, we must allow an interval of perhaps twenty years, and we must conclude, from the success of Saul in waging victorious war with Ammon, Edom and the kings of Zobah, or Syria, 14:47, that such an interval must be provided for in the order.

It is easy to understand why the historian gives no details

of these wars. His object is to bring us quickly to that part of Saul's reign in which, by two great decisive acts, he violates the kingdom charter. For years, then, we presume that Saul was faithful to that charter, prosperous and successful in every direction, but this period of prosperity is followed by a triumph of the Philistines, who so dominated the land as to bring about the conditions as described in our text, I Sam. 13:6, 7, 19-23, and it is at this period of national disaster that our 13th chapter commences the story. Indeed, by this disaster God providentially prepares the way for an account of Saul's first great test, which could not come except under hard conditions.

We may count it a difficulty to give the proper rendering of I Sam. 13:3, which says that "Jonathan smote the garrison of the Philistines that was in Geba." Very able scholars contend that this word should not be rendered "garrison" but "monument," the Philistines having erected a monument there as a memorial of their domination over the land. Another scholar contends that it means an officer who at that point collected the tribute from the subjugated Hebrews, but none of the versions so render the word, and so we will count that word to mean garrison.

Another line of interpretation, as to the order of events, is advocated by mighty minds, including Edersheim, for whose wide range of learning, splendid scholarship, piety, reverence, and especially the gift of spiritual interpretation, the author has a profound respect. According to Edersheim, whose arguments sustaining his contention are so weighty, the boldest might well hesitate to claim dogmatically the rightfulness of the order we have just considered, and according to others, including the American Standard Revisers, Saul was forty years old when he began to reign; was a man of family, his oldest son, Jonathan, being a grown man, and there is no interval between the history in chap. 12 and the history in chap. 13, but it is continuous;

therefore the wars, 14:47, with Ammon, Edom and Syria, follow the victory over the Philistines recorded in chap. 13, and the hard conditions under the domination of the Philistines recorded in chap. 13:6, 7, 19-23 were the conditions at the beginning of Saul's reign. This would place the test which decided the dynasty at the beginning of his reign, and with propriety place later the second test, in the case with Amalek, resulting in his personal rejection. With this order, Josephus agrees. The serious objections to this theory of order are thus met by its advocates. They admit that the record in chap. 9 declares Saul to be a young man when he met Samuel, and that it is a part of a young man's duty to be sent off to find the stray stock of his father, but argue that among Hebrews even a middle-aged man with a family is called a young man and is under the direction of his father, and that the preceding record nowhere gives Saul's age, and that the only place where we would expect to find it—chap. 13:1—the numeral expressed in a Hebrew letter is wanting, and must be supplied by conjecture based on the context. In meeting Paul's express statement that Saul reigned by the space of forty years, they say that it is not in the line of Paul's thought to be exact, and that his forty years is expressed in round numbers. These replies to the objections are not satisfactory, but are here given for what they are worth.

The hero of this war with the Philistines was Jonathan, Saul's brilliant son. He it is that brings on the war by smiting the Philistines' garrison at Gibeah, and he it is that decided the war in the great battle of Michmash. Saul's part of the whole story is an undignified one. The following are the events, in order, leading up to his failure under the first test to which he was subjected: It will be remembered that Saul was made king with the special view of delivering Israel from the Philistines, and that having only three thousand men they were divided into two small corps,



occupying strategically the best positions of defense against the Philistines. Then when Jonathan's exploit brought on the war by making Israel odious to the Philistines, they assembled the largest and best appointed army they ever sent to the field, and took post at Michmash. Saul sounded the trumpet alarm designed to bring all of the able-bodied men of Israel to his side. The place of assembly was Gilgal, which Samuel had appointed with the express command that when assembled they were to remain seven full days until he himself arrived, and when he had offered appropriate sacrifices, the war would be undertaken under Jehovah's direction.

But the people having no arms, and frightened at the vast and well equipped army of the Philistines, failed to respond. Some of them went into the caves in the sides of the mountains. Multitudes of them fled across the Jordan into Gilead. Saul's own bodyguard did not all assemble, and in the days of waiting began to desert, so that he was left with a handful of men, liable at any time to be cut off and destroyed by the mighty army of the Philistines. In this case it tried his patience sorely to wait seven days, his army melting, the panic increasing, the Philistine army near and threatening.

This was the condition of a test of his character. It is certain that unless there could be assurance from Jehovah that He would lead and manifest His power, the panic would increase. Samuel designedly delayed his coming until the last hour of the appointed seven days. Saul had waited until late in the seventh day; Samuel had not come. It seemed to him that he must, by sacrifices, invoke the help of Jehovah. As he puts it himself, under these conditions: "I forced myself to make the offerings to Jehovah." Before the offerings were completed, Samuel appeared, but Saul had already sinned.

It was an express stipulation of the charter of the king-

dom that the king must wait upon Jehovah's will as expressed through His prophet. Only in this way could the kingdom endure. If the king acted on his own wisdom, as the kings of other nations, then it was certain he would fail. His only hope was to abide absolutely with that provision of the charter which acknowledged the theocratic idea that the earthly king was subordinate to the divine King. The penalty of his failure in this test was not his personal rejection as king, but it was the rejection of his dynasty. He himself remained king, but the monarchy could not be transmitted to his children. The kingly authority was to be removed from Saul's family, and given to another family.

The events after this failure of Saul were as follows: First, the word of Jehovah through His prophet having been despised, Samuel leaves Saul, the panic increases, his followers decrease in number, he is left with a handful of men to take the most defensive position; then, as has been stated, it was Jonathan who delivered the people from this threatening condition. The prophet being gone, Jonathan asked Jehovah to designate by a sign whether he should attack the Philistine host. The sign was a very simple one. Jonathan having reconnoitered the enemy's position, taking with him only his armorbearer, found that they could be approached from the mountain side, and the test was, when he came within sight and hearing of the Philistines if they said, "Come up to us," instead of "Remain where you are and we will come up to you," that was to be God's sign that he should make the fight. Hence he and his armorbearer alone commenced the fight, killing twenty of the enemy. They fell into a panic, supposing a mighty army to be behind these two men, and as their army was composed of troops from several nations, these in the confusion began to fight each other. Moreover, a large number of Hebrews, who had hidden in the caves of the mountain, came out and

joined in the attack on the Philistines, so that their whole army was in inextricable confusion.

Saul, from his lookout, perceiving the confusion in the Philistine army and hearing the sound of battle, and still wishing to be guided by Jehovah, turned to the high priest present with his men, saying, "Bring hither the Ephod and enquire of Jehovah what we shall do." The tumult continuing, he then restrained the priest before he had time to give Jehovah's answer through the Urim and Thummim, and rushed headlong to the battle. So, in no respect acting under divine orders, but on his own wisdom, he enjoins that none shall stop to taste food until the Philistine army is entirely destroyed.

Two evil results come from this rash order. First, Jonathan being in the front of the battle and not having heard it, under the fatigue and hunger of a hard day's work, sees a honeycomb in the rock. He delays only to touch the honeycomb with the rod in his hand and put it to his mouth, and somewhat refreshed goes on in pursuit, thus unwittingly bringing himself under the curse of his father's vow. The second evil was that the people who had heard the command, at the end of the day, famished with hunger, took from the spoils of the battle and butchered the animals for meat, without complying with the law, which forbids an Israelite to eat blood. This second wrong being reported to Saul, he seems to be convinced that somebody had sinned, and after stopping the unlawful method of eating food, he appeals to the high priest to determine for him who had disobeyed his order. The lot disclosed that it was Jonathan, who frankly avowed it. Saul announced his death warrant, but the people refused to permit the death of the hero who had gained them the battle.

The radical critics of the Bible story consider it a light offense, that a man with authority as king, under Saul's hard conditions, after waiting till the seventh day was nearly

ended for Samuel to come, should proceed to enquire the divine will, apart from the prophet of God. To this we reply, that, while all of these hard conditions are admitted, and while the natural effect of these conditions upon any man placed under the responsibility of a leader is also admitted, these very conditions were essential to the test, if the theocratic idea of the charter is to be preserved. It made no difference how hard the conditions, nor how many should desert, nor how few remained, nor how strong the enemy, nor how formidable their equipments, if only Jehovah be with them; and it made no difference how strong an army Saul might have, nor how few in comparison with the enemy, nor how much superior his own equipments to that of the foe, he was doomed to failure if Jehovah was against him. Therefore, when, through fear and impatience, he deliberately violated the central thought in the charter of the kingdom, it was well that the kingdom should pass to another family, and not be perpetuated in his house.

It is an interesting fact that while God had withdrawn His prophet from Saul, there yet remained two methods of ascertaining the divine will: the one employed by Jonathan by asking a sign from God, the other through the high priest and the Ephod. In a wavering kind of way, Saul clings to the second method. He still on occasion seeks the mind of Jehovah through the high priest, but never unless he is in extremity. You must distinguish between the two tests of Saul. The first test which we have considered, settled the question of the dynasty alone; the next test to be considered in the next chapter, settles the question personally for Saul, as to whether he is to remain king.

The last paragraph of chap. 14: 47-52 is a generic account of Saul's reign, naming his various wars waged victoriously, his family relations, and reciting two facts characteristic of his reign, namely, (1) that sore war with the Philistines prevailed all his days; (2) all through his reign he was accus-

tomed to add valiant men of whatever nation, to his body-guard. But this custom of Saul's was not peculiar to him. David followed his example, and hundreds of monarchs since his time, some of them limiting altogether to foreigners, as the Janizaries of the Sultan of Turkey; the Scottish Archers, the Swiss Guard, and the Irish Brigade of French Kings, the Italian Corps of Charles of Burgundy, the famous Potsdam giants of the King of Prussia, and many others.

This summary of Saul's family omits the mention of Rizpah, Saul's concubine, his two children by her, and his grandchildren, sons of Jonathan and Michal. By way of anticipation of the history, and to show that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children, and further to show that in a great man's downfall many are dragged down with him, let us notice the tragic fate of the various members of Saul's family. Abner, Saul's cousin and general, was murdered by Joab. Saul himself, with three of the four sons by his wife, including the heroic Jonathan, perished in battle with the Philistines. His fourth son by his wife was assassinated; his two sons by his concubine Rizpah, and the five sons of his daughter Michal, born after she was taken from David, were all hanged to appease one of Saul's sins; Jonathan's son was crippled by his nurse, and afterwards defrauded of half his inheritance.

Note the text for a practical sermon in this section, Saul's words, "I forced myself," 13: 12.

### QUESTIONS

1. What real difficulties, puzzling to a Bible student, do we find in I Samuel 13 and 14?
2. State the principal text-difficulties, with an explanation of each.
3. What difficulty in determining the order of events?
4. What the difficulty in determining the duration of Saul's reign?
5. What other line of interpretation, as to order of events, is advocated by mighty minds, including Edersheim?
6. Who was the hero of this war with the Philistines?



7. State in order the events, leading up to Saul's failure under the first test to which he was subjected.
8. What was the penalty of Saul's failure in this test?
9. State the events after this failure of Saul.
10. What was Saul's part in the battle?
11. What have radical critics of the Bible story to say against the Divine procedure in this part of the history?
12. What is your reply to this?
13. What interesting fact must yet be noted from this connection?
14. What is the nature of the last paragraph of chapter 14: 47: 52?
15. Was this custom of Saul's peculiar to him?
16. Is this summary a full account of Saul's family?
17. By the way of anticipation of the history, and to show that the sins of the fathers are visited upon the children, and further to show that in a great man's downfall many are drawn down with him, state the tragic fate of the various members of Saul's family.
18. What text for a practical sermon in this section?

## IX

### SAUL'S UNPARDONABLE SIN, AND ITS PENALTY

*Scriptures:* References in Harmony, pp. 79, 80.

**I**T is needful to devote an extended discussion to this one chapter—I Sam. 15. The matters to be considered are stern, awful, deep and far-reaching, involving doctrines concerning the sovereignty and supremacy of God over nations and rulers, and His judicial administration in irreversible punitive judgments.

*It is a caricature of God, divesting Him of holiness and justice, which represents Him as merciful only.*

There is widely prevalent today a weak, sickly sentimentalism, which revolts at any view of the divine character other than His compassion, which divests sin of demerit and makes all punishment mere temporary chastisement and remediable. Henry Ward Beecher voiced the sentiment in his proposition: "All punishment is remediable." The sentiment developed into a probation after death, and a purification by the fires of purgatory equal in atoning and cleansing power to the blood of Christ. Such sentimentalists find I Sam. 15 a nut as hard to crack as our Lord's own teaching concerning His final judgment and the eternity of punishment. Four passages serve well as an introduction to this chapter:

1. Jehovah's own declaration of His character and attributes to Moses, Ex. 34:6-8: "And Jehovah passed by before him, and proclaimed, Jehovah, Jehovah, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abundant in loving kindness and truth; keeping loving kindness for thousands, for-

giving iniquity and transgression and sin; and that will by no means clear the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation."

2. God's taking away from Nebuchadnezzar the heart of a man and giving him the heart of a beast "till thou know that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever He will," Dan. 4:25.

3. Paul's teaching on Mars' Hill in Athens concerning God as the only object of worship and His government of nations, Acts 17:22-28.

4. Our Lord's declaration to the woman of Samaria, that God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth, John 4:23, 24.

The first great doctrine involved is that Jehovah in His sovereignty over a nation may blot it out, root and branch, when the measure of its iniquity is full. We have already found examples of this law in the case of the Canaanite nations who had left the territory assigned to them as children of Ham when the earth was divided, and occupied the territory divinely allotted to the children of Abraham, but even Israel was held back from the land until the measure of the iniquities of these nations had become full. We have now to find in the story of Amalek the fitness of the application of the doctrine to them.

It is possible but not probable that they were the children of that Amalek named as a descendant of Esau in Gen. 26:12, 16 and I Chron. 1:36. If so, they are out of the territory of Edom (Esau) and ranging as a predatory tribe over all the Negeb, or South Country, expressly allotted to Israel. Without provocation they desperately assaulted Israel on the approach to Sinai in the battle of Rephidim, so graphically described in Ex. 17:8-15, on which occasion their doom was announced by Jehovah: "I will utterly blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under Heaven. . . .

Jehovah will have war with Amalek from generation to generation." When Israel had sinned at Kadesh they combined with the Canaanites to inflict a defeat on it. Again, in the time of the judges they combined with the Midianites to destroy Israel, Judges 3:12, 13. Moses, in one of his great farewell addresses, reminds Israel of the evils done by Amalek, and recalls the doom pronounced at Rephidim, and urges Israel to execute Jehovah's will when they are established in the land, Deut. 25:17-19.

We find in far later times the last Amalekite known in history, Haman at the Persian court, seeking the destruction of captive Israel (Esther 3 to 8), and see him hanged on the gibbet erected for Mordecai. And now, as Saul is victorious over all his enemies, Samuel, as God's prophet, demands the execution of the long-pending and richly deserved doom. From the beginning and all along they have sought with persistent and incorrigible malice to thwart God's purpose to establish a nation as the custodian of His oracles, and through which all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. Amalek must perish or the world cannot be saved. It was not a mere political necessity, as voiced by Cato: "Carthage must be destroyed or Rome will perish." It was a spiritual necessity involving the only hope to all nations.

The second doctrine involved is that the instrument by which such a ban is executed must consider the doomed nation and all its property as "devoted to Jehovah for destruction," and hence no part of the spoils must be used to aggrandize the executor, or for offerings on Jehovah's altar—they are "devoted." And it is this very feature which divests the executor of all moral responsibility. He is merely God's sheriff executing a judicial sentence, and hence must act without private malice, vanity or greed. The terrible case of Achan when Jericho was "devoted" was well known to Saul, and should have admonished him.

In later Jewish history, Nebuchadnezzar, the executioner

of the divine will against Jerusalem, is called "God's Axe," and when the axe presumed to attribute to its own prowess the defeat of Israel, God humbles him as He did Saul; and when his successor, Belshazzar, blasphemously misuses the sacred vessels of the destroyed temple, then it is that a hand appeared and wrote on the wall, "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin," and that night Belshazzar died and Babylon fell.

The third doctrine involved is the discrimination in Jehovah's moral judgments, not paralleled in natural calamities as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and pestilences.

Jehovah's discriminating justice appears in this destruction of Amalek by the precaution taken to avert from the Kenites dwelling with them, the doom of Amalek. These Kenites were descendants of Hobab, that brother-in-law of Moses who accepted the invitation of Moses: "We are going to a land which the Lord our God has promised us. Come and go thou with us, and we will do thee good." So they went with Israel and shared the prosperity promised, and were always friendly and helpful, and always sheltered from the wrath of Israel's enemies. Jael, who slew Sisera, was of this people.

This sifting of the good from the bad before the final doom falls on the wicked, is richly illustrated in the saving of Noah from the doom of the world, and reminds us of the great intercession of Abraham, when Sodom was doomed and Lot rescued: "Wilt thou destroy the righteous with the wicked? . . . Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Gen. 8:23-33. It appears in the light on Goshen while Egypt was in darkness, and in all the other discriminating plagues.

The same principle of discrimination in divine justice is seen in the parable of the tares (Matthew 13:24-30), in the separation at the great judgment announced by our Lord, Matt. 15:31-34. In the same discourse, our Lord had given to the disciples a sign, by observing which they fled to Pella



and escaped the doom of Jerusalem executed by Titus. Peter, referring to two notable instances of this discrimination, expresses the thought thus: "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment unto the day of judgment," II Peter 2:9. In the same way, John, in Revelation, before the doom falls on the spiritual Babylon, says, "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not her plagues," Rev. 18:4. So the Kenites, when warned, quickly withdrew from Amalek and escaped its doom.

To lead up to the next doctrine, let us glance at the terms of Saul's commission and the fidelity of its execution. The commission runs: "And Samuel said unto Saul, Jehovah sent me to anoint thee to be king over His people, over Israel: now therefore hearken thou unto the voice of the words of Jehovah. Thus saith Jehovah of hosts, I have marked that which Amalek did to Israel, how he set himself against him in the way, when he came up out of Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass. And Saul summoned the people, and numbered them in Telaim, two hundred thousand footmen and ten thousand men of Judah," I Sam. 15:1-4. Thus commissioned by Samuel, Saul summons all the national militia, 210,000 strong, and smote Amalek from Havilah in the South Country unto the boundary of Egypt. It was a hard, desert campaign against a mobile, nomad people, and resulted in a marvelous and sweeping victory. But the record closes thus: "But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them; but everything that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly," I Sam. 15:9. Saul was so elated at its thoroughness and

extent that he erected a memorial of his prowess. He was filled with self-complacency. But God seeth not as man seeth, nor judgeth as man judgeth. In His eyes Saul had committed a presumptuous and unpardonable sin. To make this manifest, we turn from Saul in his triumph to a different scene, one of the most touching in all history.

#### THE INTERVIEW BETWEEN JEHOVAH AND SAMUEL

I Sam. 15:10, 11: "Then came the word of Jehovah unto Samuel, saying, It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king; for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And Samuel was wroth; and he cried unto Jehovah all night." In this interview is developed the doctrine of the unpardonable sin, so often referred to in both Testaments.

The sin of Saul may be thus analyzed:

1. Just what he did is thus stated, I Sam. 15:9.
2. It was a wilful sin against light and knowledge, for it violated the clearly expressed command of Jehovah, 15:3: "Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass."
3. It violated the central provision of the kingdom charter that the earthly king was only the viceroy of the heavenly King.
4. It was a presumptuous sin, being against the Holy Spirit, whose power resting on Saul was symbolized by his anointing, and which alone qualified him to be king and win victory.
5. It was rebellion, and classed with the capital sins of witchcraft and idolatry, which Saul himself punished with death.
6. It was blasphemous, in that it mingled human self-will, vanity and greed with a bloody execution whose sole

justification was obedience to Jehovah's express sentence as Supreme Judge, without the human motives of vanity, gain or malice.

7. It was an eternal sin, evidenced by Jehovah's refusal to hear Samuel's all-night intercession, by Jehovah's rebuke to Samuel for mourning for Saul, by the instant and permanent withdrawal of the Holy Spirit, by the sending instead an evil spirit to guide him to ruin, by the permanent separation of the prophet from him, by refusing to ever again communicate with him in any other way, and finally by withdrawing from him all that grace by which alone a man can become penitent. One may have remorse without the Spirit, but he cannot become penitent without the Spirit.

For the complete separation between Saul and Samuel, see I Sam. 16:1, for the permanent departure of the Holy Spirit, succeeded by an evil spirit, see I Sam. 16:14; for God's refusal to communicate with Saul any more in any way, see I Sam. 28:6; to show that God's refusal to hear intercession for a sin is a mark of its unpardonable character, see Jeremiah's reference, Jer. 15:15, and compare this with I John 5:16: "If any man see his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask, and God will give him life for them that sin not unto death. There is a sin unto death; not concerning this do I say that he should make request."

Other New Testament correspondences are shown in the words of our Lord: "He that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost committeth an eternal sin. It hath never forgiveness, neither in this world nor in the world to come." The declaration in Hebrews 10:26-29: "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful expectation of judgment. . . . A man that hath set at naught Moses' law dieth without compassion on the word of two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, think ye, shall he be judged worthy, (1) who hath trodden under

foot the Son of God, (2) and counted the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and (3) hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace?" You see there is sin against the Father, sin against the Son, and sin against the Holy Spirit; the first two pardonable, the last never, doing despite to the Holy Spirit, which is what Saul did, and hence the Spirit was permanently withdrawn from him.

We come now to the sad, eventful and last interview between Saul and Samuel. It is evident from this interview that Saul added brazen lying and hypocrisy to his rebellion. He first claims that he has fully obeyed Jehovah, even when the bleating sheep and lowing herds are within sight and sound to convict him. He then seeks to shift the blame and responsibility upon the people, and finally he attributes a pious motive to the sparing of the sheep and oxen—to sacrifice on God's altar.

Samuel's tenderness of heart toward Saul is evinced in his heartbreaking grief when Jehovah announces that Saul is lost. He not only spends a whole night in earnest but fruitless prayer that God would forgive Saul, but even after he knows that the punishment denounced on Saul is irrevocable he still mourns for him; but although his prayers in behalf of Saul are denied, and though it is a bitter cross to announce to Saul God's stern will, yet he strictly obeys, and in his interview with Saul shows more concern for God's honor than for his own grief.

We come to our next great doctrine in Samuel's reply to Saul as expressed in verse 22: "Hath Jehovah as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Jehovah? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken then the fat of rams." The doctrine here is not against the use of the God-appointed sacrifices, but it shows that mere external conformity with the law of types as embodied in sacrifices, and the observance of rituals without faith and the spirit of true worship, is as empty as a blasted

nut. The doctrine does not undervalue the form of godliness, but it does show the superiority of the power of godliness. The truth lies, not in denying the need of the form, but in relying upon the form only. This doctrine magnifies the thing signified above the sign, and magnifies the spirit above the letter. The tendency of the priesthood—the types and the rituals—throughout the monarchy was a reliance upon mere empty ceremonies. It was the mission of the prophets to counteract this, as you will find by carefully reading the following passages: Psalms 40:6-8; 51:16, 17; Isaiah 1:11-15; Jeremiah 7:22, 23; Hosea 6:6, and Micah 6:6-8. These passages should be carefully studied in their context, otherwise we will never understand the difference in the spirit of the prophetic teaching as contrasted with the letter of the priestly teaching.

From these prophetic declarations the radical critics have drawn the irrational and untenable conclusion that the testimony of the prophets shows that the Levitical part of the Mosaic law was a late addition, and particularly they stress the declaration in Jer. 7:22, 23. It is easy to answer their criticism upon all the other passages cited, but not so easy to reply to the Jeremiah passage. You might well say with reference to that passage that it was literally fulfilled in the days of the wilderness wandering after Israel's sin at Kadesh. For thirty-eight years, they being under excommunication, God did not require them to comply with the forms of His laws. They did not observe the requirements of the tabernacle worship; they did not circumcise their children, the thought in Jeremiah being that aliens without faith in the thing signified are not commanded to observe the form.

We come to another great doctrine drawn from Saul's confession, "I have sinned." The doctrine is that a mere confession in words is not a proof of grace in the heart. In Saul's case, evidently his confession was extorted by re-



morse or the fear of the consequences made manifest by Samuel. Indeed, he trembled at the appalling doom pronounced upon him, but he never repented of his sin. Spurgeon illustrates this great doctrine by preaching a famous sermon entitled, "A Sermon from Seven Texts." There were indeed seven texts, but every one of them had the same words, "I have sinned," only these words came from seven different men, and he shows that when Saul says, "I have sinned," it does not mean what it means when David says, "I have sinned," and that when Judas and Balaam say, "I have sinned," it does not mean what it means when the prodigal says, "I have sinned." The author, when he was a pastor, was so much interested by this sermon of Spurgeon's that he called the attention of his congregation to it, and found three other texts, "I have sinned," spoken by three other men, making ten in all, and called his sermon "A Sermon from Ten Texts."

Finally we need to explain the apparent discrepancy between what God says of himself, "It repenteth me," in verse 11, and what Samuel says of God in verse 29: "God is not a man that He should repent." The explanation is that "repent" in the first case does not mean the same as "repent" in the second case.

*Whenever repentance is attributed to God, it does not mean that He has changed His mind, but that a sinner's change of conduct has necessitated a change in God's attitude toward the sinner.*

The thought is fully illustrated thus in Gen. 6 in these words: "And Jehovah saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually, and it repented Jehovah that He had made man on the earth, and it grieved Him at His heart, and Jehovah said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the ground."

Here the repentance attributed to God expresses His gen-

uine grief at the corruption of the most of the human race, and that this caused a change in His attitude toward so many of the race as were thus hopelessly and incorrigibly corrupted. It does not mean absolutely the whole race, for the context shows that Noah was an exception, and that God did not repent concerning Noah, but continued the race in him.

We say, in common parlance, "The sun rises and sets." We do not mean by this that the sun revolves around the earth, but in common speech, based on appearance, we simply mean that the earth revolving on its own axis, changes its face to the sun, with the result of alternating day and night.

I have stressed the great doctrines of this section because preachers and Christian workers will be continually confronted with weak, sickly and sentimental views of the character of God, of the demerit of sin and of the eternity of punishment. This public opinion will press upon you to confine your preaching to the infinite compassion and mercy of God.

*You should, indeed, in the fullest terms, magnify God's pity, His tenderness, His mercy, His long-suffering, His forgiving of sins, but you should also stress that when this mercy is despised, when it is disregarded until the heart becomes past feeling, then come Hell and eternal punishment.*

### QUESTIONS

1. What the nature of the matters in this discussion, and of the doctrines involved?
2. What the sickly sentimentalism even now prevalent concerning these doctrines? Cite a special case.
3. What four scriptures might well serve as an introduction to this discussion?
4. What the first great doctrine cited in this discussion?
5. Recite briefly the story of the Canaanites and of the Amalekites, and show the fitness of applying the doctrine to them.
6. What the second great doctrine cited?
7. What special instances of its application?

8. What the third great doctrine cited as arising from the provision to save the Kenites from the doom of Amalek?
9. Cite the several illustrations of this doctrine given.
10. Recite Saul's commission against Amalek, and his execution of it.
11. Contrast Saul's view of his performance with God's view of it.
12. What the fourth great doctrine, developed in Jehovah's interview with Samuel?
13. Give the analysis of Saul's sin, showing its unpardonable character, giving O. T. proofs and N. T. correspondences therewith.
14. Show that Samuel's great tenderness of heart toward Saul did not weaken his fidelity to God.
15. Show how Saul, in his last interview with Samuel, added brazen lying and hypocrisy to his rebellion.
16. What the fifth great doctrine found in Samuel's reply to Saul, I Sam. 15: 22?
17. What other prophets enforced the doctrine, and how does the N. T. endorse the prophets?
18. What irrational conclusions have the radical critics drawn from these prophetic utterances, and what the answer to them, especially on Jer. 7: 22, 23?
19. What the sixth great doctrine, drawn from Saul's confession, "I have sinned?"
20. How did Spurgeon illustrate this doctrine in a famous sermon?
21. Explain the apparent discrepancy between what God says of himself, "It repenteth me," and what Samuel says of God, "God is not a man that He should repent."

## X

### DAVID CHOSEN AS SAUL'S SUCCESSOR, AND HIS INTRODUCTION TO THE COURT OF SAUL

*Scriptures:* References in Harmony, pp. 81-84

THE rejection of King Saul introduces as his successor the most remarkable man of the Hebrew monarchy, or of any other monarchy. Apart from the history of David, we cannot understand the Psalms, and apart from the Psalms we cannot understand the history. A great number of these Psalms, written by David himself, reflect and expound his own life-experiences, and forecast the experiences of Christian people of all subsequent generations. Most of the others were written by his singers and their successors. There is for every Psalm an historic occasion and background.

Again, apart from David's history, we cannot understand the marvelous development of the Messianic hope from his time on. In like manner, in his own time and later, the great prophetic utterances root in his history, with their promises and foreshadowings. Indeed, the proofs of a high order of spiritual life in the old dispensation, and of the spiritual import of the Mosaic law are most abundant in David's life, his worship and the literature arising therefrom.

To take away the history of David, removes in an important sense, the foundation of the New Testament. This connection with the New Testament may be abundantly found in references to the history of David, and the expo-

sition of it by our Lord and His apostles. Fortunately for the preachers of our day, there is a rich and trustworthy literature concerning this most notable king of history. Indeed, in view of this literature, so easily obtained, that preacher is inexcusable who remains in ignorance concerning David. No exigency of life, whether arising from poverty, sickness or any other cause, can excuse the preacher who fails to study, in a thorough and systematic manner, the life of David.

The reader will recall the books recommended when we commenced this harmony; not a multitudinous and costly list for great scholars, but a list for students of the English Bible, all cheap, all good, all easily obtained, and it was stated at that time that when we came to the history of David, other books of like character would be named. Some, indeed, of the very best of these we reserve until we come to the study of the Psalter. The preacher who has in his library choice books on the law, the Psalter and the prophets is equipped for Old Testament exposition, and prepared to undertake the study of the New Testament. Every Sunday School teacher and every layman engaged in any public activity of kingdom-service should have these books. Now to these already named, towit: Josephus, Edersheim, Dean, Geikie, Stanley, Hengstenberg, and to the three commentaries—Kirkpatrick on Samuel in the Cambridge Bible, Blakie on Samuel in the Expositor's Bible, and Murphy on I Chronicles—we will add and especially commend a little book entitled "David King of Israel," by W. M. Taylor, author also of the famous book on the parables.

It will be observed that the text-book has for its third part of Saul's reign this appropriate heading: "The Decline of Saul and the Rise of David," and that this history is found in I Sam., chapters 16 to 31, supplemented by only five passages from Chronicles—I Chron. 10:1-14; 11:13,



14; 12: 1-7; 12: 16-18; 12: 19-22—only thirty verses in all.

There are special items of interest touching David, which appear in the various genealogical tables of both Testaments, to wit:

1. His ancestry is clearly traced back to Adam, and his posterity forward to our Lord.

2. Twice is his descent marked from one of twins struggling in the mother's womb, the history in each case remarkable. You will find the history in Gen. 25: 21-26 and 38: 1-30.

3. On the maternal side are two foreigners, Rahab the Canaanitess and Ruth the Moabitess, thus connecting both David and our Lord with the Gentiles.

4. He came in the line of all the promises from Adam to his own time.

5. He came in the royal line according to the prophecy of his dying ancestor, Jacob:

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,  
Nor the Ruler's staff from between his feet,  
Until Shiloh come;  
And unto Him shall the obedience of the peoples be."

6. His birthplace and home is Bethlehem, and it was the birthplace of his greater son, our Lord.

There is some difficulty in determining his place in the family, that is, whether he was the seventh or the eighth son of Jesse. The scriptures that furnish an explanation of statements that he was the seventh son and the eighth son are I Sam. 16: 10, 11; 17: 12; II Sam. 17: 25; I Chron. 2: 15 and 27: 18. This section presents eight sons, of whom David is declared to be the youngest, and in the next chapter it expressly says that Jesse had eight sons, and again affirms that David was the youngest; but I Chron. 2: 15 makes David the seventh. A careful examination of all these passages yields this explanation: He was the seventh son of Jesse by his first wife, but younger than another son

of Jesse by his second wife; therefore he was the seventh son in the sense meant, and yet he was the eighth and the youngest son of Jesse.

As we progress in the history, we will find other members of David's kindred becoming quite prominent in the history, and some of them adding much to the troubles and tragedies of his life. His three oldest brothers are mentioned in this section as being in Saul's army, and Elihu, another brother, when David organized the kingdom, becomes captain of the tribe of Judah. Amasa, the son of his sister, Abigail, is a very prominent figure in the history, and with Abishai, Joab and Asahel, sons of his sister, Zeruiah, have much more to do with his history. One of his uncles, Jonadab, becomes an occasional counsellor in his reign, and one of his brothers becomes a mighty champion.

Our story commences under the following conditions: First, Saul, under two great tests, has failed to comply with the kingdom charter, losing the dynasty by the first, and his personal right to reign by the second, but he is yet king *de facto*, though not *de jure*. That means he is king in fact, but not in right. Jehovah has utterly withdrawn from any communication with him, and an evil spirit is leading him to ruin. The Philistines still wage sore war against him. Samuel, the aged prophet, has withdrawn from him, and is teaching in his school of the prophets at Ramah. Jehovah has already announced to Saul, not only the loss of the throne to his dynasty and his personal rejection as king, but that the Lord hath sought Him a man after His own heart, and commanded him to be captain over His people; but so far there has been no designation of this man, and you must particularly note that after the designation his rule does not commence until Saul has wrought out his own ruin.

The section opens with Jehovah's designation of the man by lot, and his anointing by Samuel. Samuel's fear that

Saul will kill him if he anoints a successor is assuaged by Jehovah's directions as to the method and purpose of the anointing. It is not the divine purpose to bring about a division of Israel under rival kings; therefore Samuel must go to Bethlehem to offer sacrifices, which would not attract Saul's attention; then the designation by lot there, with the anointing, are private acts. The object of this is to begin the preparation of David for the kingly office, which he is not to assume until the time designated by Jehovah. At no time while Saul lives does either the Spirit impress David to assume the kingly office for which he has been anointed, nor does David of his own motion conspire against Saul, or in any way seek to weaken his authority. This time the basis of God's choice is not physical stature and strength, as in Saul's case, but the state of the heart in God's sight.

The choice surprises everybody but God. Neither Samuel nor the family, nor David himself would have judged as Jehovah judged. Seldom indeed can parents, brother or sister point out the member of the family who shall become illustrious, nor does the illustrious one himself always anticipate his future honor and position. A boy often aspires to great things, and imagines most vividly the glories that shall rest on him when he shall have the world in a sling, and vividly pictures to himself a home-coming when all the other members of his family shall find shelter under his wings, and all the neighbors who had failed to recognize his budding genius shall stand with mouths agape, while salvos of artillery, unfurled banners, flower-decked streets proclaim his honor, while bands are playing "See, the Conquering Hero Comes!" But time, the great revealer, shows these egotistical fancies to be as "the airy nothings" of a dream.

A boy in East Texas offered to take me from one preaching place to another, in order, as he stated, to tell me that

he would be the governor of Texas, but I haven't heard from him since. Shakespeare says, "Some men are born great; some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them," but being born to a high honor, or having it thrust upon you, will only add to your unfitness and make your failure more conspicuous, if you have not the character and training to wear it well.

It may be that some one of my readers, in casting his horoscope, has seen himself a preacher cutting a wide swath, salary of \$10,000 a year, no building able to hold his congregations, and glaring headlines in the great dailies announcing that he is "shaking the foundations of hell and opening the portals of Heaven."

Some of my admiring friends, judging from my great knowledge of the history of wars, predicted that I would at least become a corps commander, should a war arise in my time. A war came and left me a high private, while only such "little" men as Lee, Jackson, Stuart and the Johnsons on one side, and Grant, Sherman, Sheridan and Thomas on the other side, wrote their names in the niches of the temple of fame—but these "little" men were all trained at West Point.

The history we are studying makes it evident that Saul had neither the character nor the training to become a great ruler, but David had both. Woe to any of us who underestimate the knowledge of these three things: (1) a right state of heart toward God, (2) the discipline of preparation and training, and (3) dependence on the power of the Holy Spirit.

*Only men of great heart, great preparation and great power with God achieve anything worth while in the ministry.*

David's early life in the fields and valleys and mountains, with its isolation and loneliness given to meditation and reflection, put him near to nature's heart and impressed

him with the fact that an individual man is insignificant in the scheme of God's great universe, and hence taught him to sing: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him, and the son of man that thou visitest him?" and also taught him to sing, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." His occupation gave him the shepherd's heart, and evoked that sweetest of all hymns: "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want," and that same shepherd office called out high courage that made him triumph in solitary grapple with the lion and the bear that would prey upon his flock, and gave him a matchless skill with the sling that would one day smite down a boasting giant.

The hardships of this calling in such a field gave him toughness of fibre and power of endurance. He could bear hunger and cold and heat without fainting. He himself says that he became as "fleet of foot as a wild gazelle," and could conquer a goat in climbing a mountain. His association with the school of the prophets gave him devotion of spirit, and developed that natural cunning of fingers that struck the strings of a harp in a way never equalled by any other bard. His music would not only charm a serpent, soothe a savage breast, drive away melancholy, but would dispossess the devil, and above all things, with his anointing, the Spirit came upon him, and was never taken away from him. Only once he let Satan prompt him to do a disastrous thing, and once only through sin was he constrained to pray, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me, and renew a right spirit within me."

Apart from this early life-preparation, before he appears in public and begins to reign so long and so well, there awaits him a novitiate of training under sufferings and per-



secutions such as seldom fall to the lot of man. His personal appearance is described in chapter 16:12 and 17:2, as ruddy of face, brilliant of eye, very handsome in his person. We are able to distinguish the Spirit's power that came on David from the same power on Saul. In Saul's case, it was only occasional, and finally utterly withdrawn; in David's case, the "Spirit abode on him from that day forward." An old writer thus distinguishes between a sinner and a saint: "The Spirit visits a sinner, but dwells with a saint; and conversely, Satan visits a saint, but dwells with a sinner." A very fine thought.

Here we come upon a controversy: What was the occasion of David's first introduction to the court of Saul? Was it the harp-playing of 16:14-23, or was it the slaying of Goliath and the consequent victory, as told in chapter 17? If the first, how do you account for Saul's ignorance of David when he appears on the second occasion, 17:55-58, that is, Saul asking Abner, "Who is this young stripling?" and Abner saying, "I don't know." They don't seem to have ever heard of him. Some critics contend that I Sam. 16 and 17 are from different historic sources, and that they contradict each other flatly and irreconcilably in giving the occasion of David's introduction to the court of Saul. Moreover, they say that if the harp-playing precedes the other, then the ignorance of not only Saul himself, but of the whole court concerning David and his father, is inexplicable, especially as in the nature of the case there could be no great interval of time between the two events, since David is, in the second, twice called a "stripling."

The possibility of two sources is conceded, but not the certainty of it. It is the custom of inspired writers to repeat on new occasions enough of the past history to make clear the context. The court of Saul was ignorant of David and his family on both occasions. The first time, only one of the servants knows anything about David and his family,

and his skill of song and speech, and Jehovah's presence with him. The servant's word about David and his family would make no great or lasting impression on Saul and his court. The chief thing with them was the curing of Saul, and when after several harp-playings, the cure seems permanent, the human helper returns to the care of his flocks and is swiftly forgotten. You will understand their ignorance from the fact that Samuel's anointing of David was not in the public eye, but in private, and the spiritual endowment that followed would be known only by a few neighbors having knowledge of David's shepherd life; none of it was known abroad. His ministrations and harp-playing were in the sick-room and not before the court. Moreover, Saul himself, while possessed of an evil spirit, suffered from mental aberration, which naturally impaired his memory, and while the record of the harp-playing shows that Saul loved the healer, we all know by experience how grateful to the physician is every patient in the moment of relief, but if we continue well, how easily the physician passes out of our memory and life, until we get sick again. It is somewhat like the old proverb:

"When the devil is sick,  
The devil a saint would be;  
When the devil is well,  
The devil a saint is he!"

Solomon says in his penitential book, "There is no remembrance of former *generations*," Eccles. 1:11. But there is no need to quote this general reflection of Solomon, since one of the most striking characteristics of human courts is that presence only keeps one in mind. Absence obliterates you from the memory of the great, to whom yesterday is a "long time ago," and with whom the new man or the new event fills all the vision. As an illustration of the characteristic of kings to forget their benefactors, the great Earl of Stratford, himself a notable illustration

of this fact, said, when his death warrant was signed by the ungrateful Charles I, "Put not your trust in princes," so we needn't concern ourselves about the contradictions the critics are so ready to find.

In all literature no book can be found more natural, more true to life, more vivid and simple in its records of past events, than I Samuel. Each event is recorded as by an eyewitness in its own independent setting, absolutely devoid of any strain to appear consistent with previous statements. Any lawyer will tell you that the evidence of a witness is to be distrusted when he labors to harmonize one statement with another. He is sure to tell a lie when he does that.

Our conclusion, then, is fixed that the harp-playing preceded the Goliath incident. Indeed, the evidence is positive that David did not continue at Saul's court on his first introduction. You were told in II Sam. 17:12 that he would only come when there was the sickness, and then go back to his home; but after his second introduction, as you learn from 18:2, Saul did not allow him to go home any more.

Sir Walter Scott, in one of his romances, makes the harp-playing of a beautiful girl drive away the temporary madness of a highland chief. In which romance is this incident related? I will ask also, What did Shakespeare say about the man devoid of music? Can you answer that? The question also arises: How do you explain the healing of Saul? The answer is obvious. The Spirit of the Lord in David's music was greater than the demon possessing Saul.

Other items on the designation and anointing of David we need not discuss further, nor the healing of Saul by David's playing the harp, but something should be said about the fight with Goliath and the victory that ensued.

We have before us a giant indeed, and we learn from other parts of the Bible that there was a family of these giants. This man was not the only one of the family. You would have a hard time carrying his spear, and you would

be unable to carry his armor. The two armies came face to face, with just a ravine between, one on each hill. The one that advances has the task of going down hill under fire, and coming up a hill under charge; therefore Goliath, the giant, according to custom, steps out and challenges anybody in Israel to test the fate of the two nations on a single combat, and in order to provoke a response, he, according to the usual custom, curses the gods of the people that he challenges. This happens for forty days in succession. Israel is humbled; the Philistines triumph. About that time, Jesse wants to send some rations to his three boys in the army, just like parents sometimes send provisions to students in school, and David is appointed to carry them, and when he gets there, he hurriedly puts the provisions with the baggage of the army, and rushes to the front. He wants to see the fight, and he hears a shout and beholds that giant come out and repeat his insulting and blasphemous challenge, and he inquires why somebody has not responded. His older brother says, virtually, "You had better go back and be tied again to your mother's apron string. What's a little boy like you doing on a battle field where men only ought to be?" David responds that nothing he has said was out of place, and leaves the brethren, who did not believe in him, as the brothers of our Lord did not believe in Him, and goes and mixes around among the soldiers and urges that somebody in the name of Jehovah could smite that giant, and that he is willing to undertake it.

Saul, who had offered an immense reward to anyone who would accept the challenge and defeat the giant, including even his own daughter for a wife, hears of David's offer and sends for him. He is surprised to see a boy—a mere stripling—and he says: "You? You can't fight this giant." David says, "Sire, I can. I am the shepherd of my father's flock, and when a bear and a lion came out to prey on the flock, I fought them unarmed, and when they

reared up against me, I took them by the mane and slew them." Saul was a much bigger man than David. He said, "I am willing to let you go if you will put on my armor." David put it on and took it off, saying that he could not fight in Saul's armor. What a text for the preacher! Never try to fight as some other man fights. Don't try to preach like Brother Truett. You can't do it. Don't imitate him.

So David marches down against Goliath with nothing but a sling. He picks up in that ravine five pebbles. It excites the scorn of the giant that a boy unarmed should be sent against him, and he says, "Come up here and let me give your flesh to the fowls of the air," and again curses Jehovah. David never stops, but runs to meet him, puts a stone in the sling, whirling it around; it flies and smites the giant in the middle of the forehead, and buries itself in his brain.

The text says that the giant so struck fell on his face. Why did not he fall backwards? It is a notable fact, witnessed a thousand times on the battlefield, and in executing men by shooting, that when the firing squad fires and the bullets enter the man's heart, he always falls on his face, never backwards. It is one of these natural things that continually creep into Samuel's narrative that makes one know it is a true story. I have seen thousands of men fall in battle, and I never saw a man shot through the brain or heart that did not fall forwards.

David rises up, takes Goliath's sword and cuts his head off, places the head at Jerusalem for the present, puts the armor in his tent, and here comes the question that you may answer: When does Goliath's sword appear again in the history? What did he do with it, and where does it come to light again? With the fall of the giant the Philistines are panic-stricken and the Israelites encouraged, and the fight joins, and it is in the book of Chronicles that we learn a fact not stated in Samuel. That passage about



Shammah does not belong there where the harmonist puts it, but the one about Eleazar may be rightly placed. The fight was waged in a plat of ground full of barley. Eleazar stands with him and does great exploits, and so they put the Philistines to rout, and Eleazar afterwards, when David becomes king, is one of his mighty men. The victory is very great, and David returns and Saul appropriates him. He is never more allowed to go back to his father's house.

### QUESTIONS

1. What the general theme of the Harmony's third part of the reign of Saul?
2. What part of I Samuel covers the theme?
3. How much does I Chronicles supplement?
4. What the present section?
5. What new book commended?
6. What the importance of the history of David, and its relation to the Psalms, the Mosaic law, the larger Messianic hope, the prophets, and the New Testament?
7. What the richness of the literature on David, and the preacher's duty concerning it?
8. What items of special interest in genealogical tables of both Testaments concerning David?
9. Where his birthplace and home?
10. Was he the seventh or eighth son of Jesse, and what scriptures, when compared, answer the question?
11. Name other members of David's family, some of them quite prominent in the subsequent history, who add to the troubles and tragedies of his later life.
12. State the conditions under which the story of his life opens.
13. What the divisions of this section?
14. Give the story of Jehovah's designation of David, and his anointing in such a way as to show they were both private.
15. What the basis of the choice of king this time, and who were surprised at it, and why?
16. What the author's observations on this point?
17. What three things should a preacher never underestimate?
18. What the elements of David's preparation to be king, arising from his early life and office?
19. What says Shakespeare of the man devoid of music?
20. What David's highest qualification immediately following his anointing, and contrast it with Saul's like qualification.
21. What an old-time preacher's distinction on this point between a saint and a sinner?
22. What apropos proverb concerning the devil?
23. What David's personal appearance?
24. How do you dispose of the apparent contradiction between

16: 14-23 and 17: 12-58 as to the occasion of David's first introduction to the court of Saul; and if you say the harp-playing was the first, then explain the ignorance of David and his family manifested by Saul and his court on the second introduction.

25. How do you explain David's healing of Saul by music?

26. In what romance does Sir Walter Scott give the story of a highland chief's madness being dispelled by a girl's harp-playing?

27. What the relative position of the opposing armies of Saul and the Philistines?

28. What the nature of Goliath's challenge, and why does he curse Jehovah?

29. What Saul's offer for reward for a champion who would defeat him?

30. What the occasion of David's presence on the battle-field?

31. Why his indignation that no Israelite responded to the challenge, and his oldest brother's rebuke?

32. Show from his interview with Saul that faith and not immodesty prompted him to accept the challenge.

33. Why did he reject Saul's armor, and rely upon his shepherd's sling?

34. Why did Goliath, when smitten, fall on his face?

35. What the effect of the fall of Goliath on the two armies?

36. What hero stood by David in the fight, before the main body of Saul's army arrives?

37. Tell the history of David's disposition of Goliath's head, armor and sword, and when again does the sword appear in the history?

## XI

### THE WAR BETWEEN LOVE AND HATE—THE STORY OF A LOST SOUL

*Scriptures:* References in Harmony, pp. 84-87

**T**HIS discussion commences at I Sam. 18:1, and here we are confronted, first of all, by another text-difficulty. We saw in a former discussion that about 27 verses of the 17th chapter did not appear in the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, but we know that those omissions must have been in the original Hebrew, for Josephus follows the text of the 17th chapter strictly in his history of the Jews, but when we come to the omissions in the 18th chapter from the Septuagint, Josephus does not give them. I repeat that our present Hebrew text was derived from late manuscripts of about the 9th or 10th century. I do not mean to say that there were no Hebrew texts before that, for Jerome, who translated the whole Bible into Latin, the edition called the "Vulgate," in the 4th century, had Hebrew texts before him, and in a Roman Catholic English Bible we find Jerome's Latin Bible translated into English and called the "Douay Bible," which contains every word of our text. There are about 14 verses of the 18th chapter that do not appear in any manuscript of the Septuagint which we have except the Alexandrian manuscript, and it seems to be added there. It is not in the Vatican manuscript of the Septuagint, but we may thoroughly rely upon everything set forth in the 17th and 18th chapters as being a part of the Word of God.

Before commencing to expound this section I call atten-

tion to a word in the 27th verse of the 18th chapter, "tale"—"a full tale." That is an old English word not much used now. I give an example of its old English use. Milton in one of his poems, "L'Allegro," uses this language:

"Every shepherd tells his tale,  
Under the hawthorne in the dale."

What is the meaning of the word, "tale?" Does it mean that every shepherd tells his story, or narrative? No; that is not the meaning of the old English word, "tale." "Every shepherd tells his *number*, his reckoning of the sheep." From that we get our English word, "tally." The shepherds number their flocks in the evening to see if they have the same number that they took out in the morning. "Every shepherd makes his tally, under the hawthorne in the dale." That is what Milton means.

There is another old English word in chapter 18:30—"set," "much set by." What does "set" mean there? The meaning of "set" in such a connection is "esteem." We say, "I set great store by such a man," which means, "I esteem him very much."

Yet another English word in this section, where Jonathan's bow and arrows are called "artillery." Our meaning of the word "artillery" is confined to cannon, but the original word meant any implement of war. These remarks on "tale," "set" and "artillery" are to show the changes that have taken place in the signification of words in the English language since the Bible was translated by the King James revisers. Paul says, "I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto)." Now "let" means "permitted;" then it meant "hindered"—"I was hindered hitherto."

Having disposed of that reference to the text, and those four instances of the changed meaning of old English words, we will take up the discussion proper. I commence with this observation, that from the 18th to the 26th chapter, inclusive, we have a section of the history that ought to

be studied at one sitting. It is a pity to break it up into fragments. The parts are so intimately related that we need to have the whole of the story before us in order to get in their relations certain great lessons. These lessons are:

1. These nine chapters, from the 18th to the 26th inclusive, show a protracted conflict between hate and love, and love's final triumph; Saul's hate against David; the love of Jonathan, Michal, the people, the prophets and the priests for David, warring against Saul's hate of David, and we see Satan inspiring the hate and Jehovah inspiring the love. That is the first lesson of these nine chapters.

2. These chapters show that there is a conflict between folly and wisdom, for hate is folly and love is wisdom; therefore the hating man is showing himself to be a fool at every step of the history, and the loving man is showing himself to be wise at every step of the history. Not only is hate criminal, but it is the most foolish passion in which you can indulge. The remarkable wisdom and forbearance of David defeat all the folly of Saul's hate. That is one of the most evident things in the nine chapters. Under similar conditions not one man in a million would imitate David; not one in any number of millions under similar conditions would do as David did unless he were influenced by the Holy Spirit of God. History abounds in lessons to show that men, under long, continued provocations, not only strike back, which David didn't do, but they become traitors to their own countries when the persecuting one is the ruler of the country. If they are not under the influence of God, they will end in becoming traitors.

We have a signal example in Benedict Arnold. There was not a more valiant soldier and capable general in the army in the Revolution than Benedict Arnold. He was the bravest of the brave, but Congress not only showed lack of appreciation of him, but put one indignity on him



after another. Then he acted unlike David—he sold his country to the British and became a general in the British army.

In studying Roman history we see the same thing in Coriolanus. When the Romans mistreated this great general he went over to the enemy of Rome, the Volsci, and led a triumphant army to the very gates of Rome. The Romans in terror asked his mother to go and plead with him to spare Rome. She went out and appealed to his patriotism and to his love of family. He said, "Mother, you have saved Rome, but you have lost your son; for the Volsci will kill me unless I capture Rome," and they did kill him when he refused to capture Rome.

When a man is not under the guidance of God's Holy Spirit and injuries are put upon him, he will strike back and resort ultimately to any expedient to glut his vengeance.

3. The third great lesson is the historian's graphic description of the progress of the passions, whether good or bad, ever developing until each one comes to a final crystallization. More than once I have told you of that power of the historian in I Samuel in tracing developments.

4. The fourth lesson is that both hate and love recognize the will of Jehovah in the passing events. We see Saul's hate discovering in David's triumph that he is the rival whom God has appointed to succeed him, and we will see Jonathan's love discovering the same thing.

5. The fifth lesson is the distinct stages of Saul's remorse when under the influence of Jonathan's counsel and David's good will.

6. The sixth lesson is the progress in the attachment between David and Jonathan. There is nothing like it in the history of the world, though we find in the classics the remarkable love between Damon and Pythias. There are three distinct covenants between Jonathan and David.

7. The whole story shows that if God be for a man,

neither man nor devil can be against him successfully, and that if God be against a man none can be successfully for him. As Paul puts it: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" Oftentimes we have to fight public opinion. Oftentimes we feel that we are isolated from our kind on account of the position that we are compelled to take as God's representative, but let this comfort us, that if God be for us; if, indeed, we are on God's side, nothing ultimately will prevail against us.

8. The eighth lesson is that high above Saul, Jonathan, Michal, David, we see two worlds interested—Satan endeavoring to thwart the establishment of the kingdom of God and using Saul and others as his instruments, and Jehovah proceeding to establish His kingdom and using David, Jonathan and others as His instruments.

*If we don't recognize the fact that the world above and the world beneath touch human lives and have much to do with events, then we never can understand the history of any one man, much less one nation.*

That was the trouble in Job's mind. If he could have seen what the historian tells us about, that coming together of the angels, good and bad, when God held His stated meeting of angels, and knew that an evil angel was seeking to do him harm, and that he could not do this except as God permitted it, then he could have understood why undeserved afflictions came upon him, and why God permitted them. Homer, while holding to the wrong kind of gods, not only follows the true poetical idea, but he follows the true idea in representing all the gods and goddesses as interested in the Trojan war. I have studied it so much that when a war commences, say between Japan and Russia, I look for the devil's tracks and also look for the tracks of Jehovah, and I can better understand the issue of wars when I do that.

These are the great lessons that are set forth in the nine

chapters. We will commence now and discover these great lessons one after another as we take up the story seriatim, and we note first the progress of Saul's hate. What was the origin of Saul's hate? When he committed his first sin God announced to him that He had selected a man after His own heart to whom He would give the kingdom, and when Saul committed his second sin God again refers to His purpose to substitute for Saul a better man. That rankles in Saul's mind. Always he carries that thought with him: "Somebody is to be put up to succeed me," and hence he will be looking around, watching every arriving man—"Maybe he is the one." There we see the origin of it.

The first expression of it comes in this section, which says that after the great victory over the Philistines by David described in the last chapter, and the pursuit clear to the gates of the Philistine cities, that when the army returned home the women, according to a custom of that time and of this time, determined to celebrate the return of the victorious army, so they sang, antiphonally. It was like the responsive singing of Miriam and her choir in the pæan of deliverance after the safe passage of the Red Sea. The record says that they sang antiphonally, and the first part of them would sing, "Saul hath slain his thousands" and the other part would respond, "But David hath slain his ten thousands."

When these women sang that way it excited Saul's wrath, and he instantly thought of what God had announced, and he says, "What more is there for him but the kingdom?" "Here is a man who has gained a great victory and the people are with him, and even the women are putting him above me," hence the text says that from that day Saul *eyed* David. When a man looks at another sideways under lowered lids, that is what we call "eyeing a man." He is under suspicion from that time on. That is the first

expression of the hate of Saul, and you find it in chapter 18:8, 9.

We now come to a truth of very great importance. In a previous part of the book we have seen that God, in David's music, could exorcise the demon in Saul, and did do it, and for quite a while Saul was not under the possession of the demon, but here comes a word from our Lord fitting the case exactly. It is found in Matt. 12:43-45: "The unclean spirit, when he is gone out of the man, passeth through waterless places seeking rest, and findeth it not. Then he saith, I will return into my house whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he and taketh with himself seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man becometh worse than the first." That is pertinent to this case. A demon may be cast out once, then, as Jesus says to a man under similar conditions, "Go and sin no more, lest a worse thing befall thee." Should that demon come back he cannot again be exorcised. The text here is the proof. When that evil spirit, taking advantage of Saul's hate, re-entered Saul, they sent for the usual remedy—David must come and play for him. But David plays and the spirit does not leave. On the contrary, he prompts Saul to thrust a javelin at the heart of David. That is the pivotal point in Saul's case. There he passes the boundary line.

"There is a time, we know not when;  
A place, we know not where;  
That marks the destiny of men  
To glory or despair."

It is as if a man under the habit of drunkenness is cured at a sanitarium. Let him beware of ever falling into the habit again; the sanitarium won't cure him the next time. In other words, a sinner that does not avail himself of the means of grace that are applied to him will ultimately get

past feeling; like Pharaoh, his heart will be hardened until it never can be softened again. Like Ephraim, he will become wedded to his idols.

The most notable instance of this that ever came within my experience was at a meeting that I held in the old Providence Church in Burleson County. Ah! what a meeting! Seventy days and nights, until it seemed that every sinner in fifteen miles of the place was converted. One night when I made an appeal to see if we could find anybody that was unsaved, a white-haired old man got up and said, "I am the man. I have been watching your meetings. There was a time when such things moved my heart, but I kept trifling with the monitions of the Spirit of God that impelled me to turn to Christ and be saved, and in one meeting after another I resisted and said, 'No, No, No,' and at last, as if God had said to me, 'Your *no* shall be forever,' all feelings in that direction were taken away from me, and as I stand up here before you tonight telling you this experience, you see a man doomed, without hope of mercy, simply because the Spirit of God, who alone can lead a man to salvation, has departed from me forever." It made a solemn impression.

We notice now that the spirit can't be reached by music, even when God is in the music, and hence there is an attempt to destroy David's life. The next step is found in verse 12. That tells us that Saul was afraid because God's Spirit was on David, and had left him. There is one of the consequences that the Spirit of God has left—fear. He was afraid, and he was afraid of David, so he takes another step to destroy David. He removed him from office near his person and gave him a position in the firing line of the army, not to honor David by that promotion, but the text tells us he did it in the hope that David may perish by the hands of the Philistines, in some of the fights. We have an old saying coming from Virgil, "Beware of the Greeks



bringing gifts." That was said when they left the Trojans that great wooden horse, which had 500 Greeks hidden in it. It was so large they could not bring it in through the gates, and had to break down the wall to get it in, and that night the Greeks came out of the horse and opened the gates and the city was taken. And that was Saul's meaning when he promoted David to this high office in his service. He meant to destroy him by it.

The next step in the progress is in verse 15. When Saul saw that David acted very wisely in the new position he was "more afraid." David didn't get killed. God took care of him, and he acted so wisely in the administration of the new office that it increased Saul's fear.

We come to verse 17, and ask what next Saul will do? What of this hate of his? To what expedient will he now resort? He approaches David secretly through his officers, as though he was conferring another great honor on him, and offers his daughter in marriage. He should be the son-in-law of the king if he will give—not money for her dowry, for David did not have it—but "Kill me 100 Philistines and bring evidence that you have killed them and complete the tally"—that is, let the number be counted. Now what was his object? He didn't want David in his family, but he would set a snare by the use of his own daughter, and the object of it would be to put David in a position of personal danger. Saul's thought was that in fighting the 100 Philistines some one would kill him.

Verse 20 shows progress again. "And when Saul saw it was Jehovah with David, and that all the people of Israel loved him, he was more afraid." Your text says that Michal loved him. The real text is, "When Saul saw that Jehovah was with him and that all the people loved him he was more afraid." Notice the progress, and that is this evil spirit in Saul increasing his madness, and they try the music remedy one more time. So David is sent for to play

before Saul, and again the evil spirit prompts Saul, and he thrusts a javelin at him the second time. David saw that he could not longer fool with that kind of situation and he left and went to his own private house. There is a limit to the power of music. True, Shakespeare says,

"A man who has no music in his soul,  
Nor concord of sweet sound,  
Is fit for treason, stratagems and spoils."

The next step in the progress of that hate is in chapter 19. Saul called Jonathan to him and certain of his officers and gave them a peremptory command to execute David. Jonathan says, "Father, what hath he done? He doesn't deserve death. He hath never done you any harm. Why should David be slain?" The pleading of the beloved Jonathan prevails. When Jonathan so humbly pleads, Saul's heart melts and David comes back and heads the whole army and wins another glorious victory over the Philistines. And now Saul's hate will not respect the pleading of Jonathan, so David went to his home saying that he could not stay near Saul without provoking death.

Then follows an incident that David commemorates in the Psalms. They surround his house. One of the most despicable acts of tyranny is what is called "domiciliary visitation." Man's home is regarded as his castle, and when the privacy of his home is invaded by espionage or by an attempt to take life on his own hearthstone, there is no step beyond that a tyrant can go. Revolution comes when that is attempted. That is why the Huguenots left France; the dragoons were stationed in their homes, and the privacy of the home was violated. They could not even in private whisper to each other but the words were heard by some of these spies and reported. In the Declaration of Independence that is one of the accusations against the king—that he had stationed troops in private houses without

the consent of the people. It made a marvelous impression on David's mind that night when he looked out and saw the sentinels all around his house. David's wife helps him that time. She says, "If you don't escape tonight, tomorrow you will be a dead man," and a woman when she is stirred up in a matter and puts her wits to work is not easy to thwart. So she puts a teraphim—a wooden image—in David's bed and tied a wig or something over it and wrapped the image up to represent a man sleeping, and when the soldiers came in to arrest David she said, "You see he is sleeping," and they waited till morning and David got away.

### QUESTIONS

1. What textual difficulty in I Sam. 18, and what the discussion thereon?
2. What the meaning of the old English word, "tale," and what other English word is derived from it?
3. What the meaning of the old English word, "set," in the phrase, "much set by," in I Sam. 18:30?
4. What the meaning of the word, "artillery," as used in this connection?
5. What the meaning of the word, "let," as used by Paul in Rom. 1:13, and what the lessons of these uses of the words, "tale," "set," "artillery," and "let?"
6. What chapters of I Samuel should be studied as one section, and why?
7. What the great lessons of these chapters?
8. In what two respects is David's self-restraint under these persistent and murderous attacks of Saul without a parallel, and what two great men under less provocation became traitors to their native land?
9. What the difficulty in Job's mind, and what instance in the classics referred to in illustrating it?
10. What the origin of Saul's hate, and what the first expression of it?
11. What the words which so graphically describe Saul's hate, and the counter-progress of David's wisdom?
12. What saying of our Lord shows the fearful state of a man who allows an exorcised demon to re-enter the soul?
13. Show by David's music, Jonathan's intercession, and the gift of prophesying that what expels the demon the first time will not avail the second time.
14. Quote the stanza given to illustrate the sin against the Holy Spirit.
15. Relate the incident given to illustrate this sin.

16. What the steps of progress in Saul's hate of David as revealed in his efforts to take his life?
17. What does Shakespeare say of a man who has no music in his soul?
18. In what Psalm does David commemorate the watching around his house at night?
19. How does David escape from that house, and what later and greater Saul escaped like David through a window?
20. What illustrations of this incident of watching around David's house in later history?

## XII

### SAUL'S MURDEROUS PURSUIT OF DAVID

*Scriptures:* References in Harmony, pp. 87-91

LET us trace in the Old Testament the usage of the word, "teraphim," which occurs in chapter 19:13: "And Michal took the teraphim, and laid it in the bed, and put a pillow of goat's hair at the head thereof and covered it with the clothes," answering this five-fold question: (1) Is the word, "teraphim," ever used in a good sense? (2) What was it? (3) Was its use a violation of the first or the second commandment? (4) What the meaning of such an image being in David's house? (5) Show how in history the use of images became a dividing line between Protestants and Romanists, and what the danger of their use even as a help toward the worship of God.

We find the first use of it in Genesis 31:19, 26, 31 and 34. That chapter shows how Jacob and his wives and children and property left his father-in-law, Laban, on their return to the Holy Land, and that Rachel stole her father's "teraphim;" and when Laban pursues, as we find in the same chapter, it is one of his accusations against Jacob that he had stolen his household gods. Jacob invites him to make a search and Rachel puts them under a camel-saddle and sits down on the saddle and won't get up, and so Laban can't find them. Then, in Genesis 35:2 Jacob orders all of his family to put away those false gods.

The next use of the word comes in Judges 17 and 18. The history is this: Micah, in the days of the judges, makes



to himself molten and graven images and teraphim and puts them in a separate room in his house, *i.e.*, has a little temple, and consecrates his own son to be a priest, but eventually there comes along a Levite, who is a descendant of Moses through Gershom, and Micah employs this Levite on a salary to be his priest and to conduct his worship through these images graven, molten and the teraphim, using an ephod. A little later the Danites on their migration capture all these household gods of Micah, and the priest as well. Micah pursues and complains that they robbed him of his gods. The Danites advise him to go home and keep his mouth shut, and in the meantime they capture Laish in the northern part of the Holy Land and set up these same images and use that same descendant of Moses with the ephod to seek Jehovah through those images.

The next time we find the word is in this section, where Michal took a teraphim and put it in David's bed and made it look like somebody asleep. The next usage of the word is found in II Kings 23:24, in the early part of the great reformation led by King Josiah, who, after the law of the Lord had been found, causes all Judah to put away the teraphim and everything that was contrary to the Mosaic law.

We find it next in order of time in Hosea 3:4, where a prediction is made that Israel for a long time shall be without king or ephod or teraphim, and the last use is in Ezek. 21:22, 23. Ezekiel in exile shows how the king of Babylon came to the forks of the road and used divinations, etc., by the use of teraphim.

The word is never used in a good sense. Jehovah appoints His own way of approach to Him and of ascertaining the future, condemning the use of teraphim in approaching Him. Even that passage in Hosea only shows that after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, the Jews for a long time—the present time included—will have no king, no

ephod, no teraphim. That is, they would in no sense be idolaters, and yet their worship of Jehovah for this long period—including the present time—will be empty and vain until just before the millennial times, when they in one day accept the long-rejected Messiah.

A teraphim is an image, but it is distinguished from graven or molten images in two particulars: (1) it is carved out of wood; (2) it always represented a human form, whereas the graven and molten images were always of metal and oftenest took the form of the lower animals, like the calf that Aaron made at Sinai, and the calves set up by Jeroboam at Dan and Bethel. To make the distinction clearer by a passage in the New Testament, the image of the great goddess Diana at Ephesus (Acts 19) which was said to have fallen down from heaven, was a teraphim; that is, was a wooden image in human form and a very ugly one, but the little silver shrines of the temple of Diana made by Demetrius, the silversmith, and other silversmiths, were either graven or molten images.

Another distinction is that the graven and the molten images were oftenest worshiped as gods, the teraphim oftenest used as a method of approach to their gods, and both of them were violations of the second commandment.

The teraphim in David's house was Michal's, not David's, as the stolen teraphim of Laban's was Rachel's and not Jacob's. There is no evidence that either Jacob or David ever resorted to teraphim or favored their use.

Coming now to the last part of the question, one of the chief issues between the Protestants and the Romanists in the Reformation was that the Romanists multiplied images in their worship—metallic or wooden images. For instance, an image of Jesus on the cross, an image of the Virgin Mary, the cross itself, or the image of some saint. These, when carved out of wood representing human form, were teraphim, but when they were made out of metal were

graven or molten images. While the better and more learned class of the Romanists only use these images as objective aids to worship, the masses of the people become image worshipers, bowing down before the image of the Virgin Mary and ascribing adoration to her and praying to her, and ascribing all the grace of salvation to her. Even the pope himself says, in one of his proclamations, that the fountain of all grace is in Mary. In this way they violate that fundamental declaration of our Lord that God is a Spirit and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. The Greek word, *eikon*, an image, equals in sense the Hebrew word, "teraphim," and other images, so when the Protestants, in their fury against what they called idolatry, would break up these images wherever they found them they were called "iconoclasts," *i.e.*, "breakers of images." Hence, when Charles I wrote that famous book, "Eikon," Oliver Cromwell demanded of Milton that he write a reply to it, and he named his reply "Iconoclast," a breaker of the image. The image question is a big one in history.

There is a relation to that teraphim of Michal and her wifely relation to David. It showed that while indeed she loved David when he was a prosperous man, she had no sympathy with his religion, nor was she willing to share his exile and its sufferings. She could never say to him what Ruth said to Naomi: "Entreat me not to leave thee, nor cease from following after thee; for where thou lodgest I will lodge, thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried." When David's fortunes were eclipsed she readily enough consented to become the wife of another man, to whom her father gave her, and whom she loved more than she had ever loved David. When David, after he became king, sent for her to be returned to him, as we learn from II Sam. 3, she came unwillingly, and at a still later date

when David brought the Ark from Kirjath-jearim to put it in Jerusalem and participated in the religious exercises of the day, Michal looked out of the window and saw him and despised him, and when he came in she broke out on him in scornful speech, mocking him for the part he had taken in that day's religious service. When a wife differs so radically from her husband in his religion as Michal did, the marital relation is much affected by it.

The reconciliation of the declaration in II Sam. 6:23 that Michal to the day of her death had no children, with the declaration in chapter 21:8 that there were five sons of Michal, is this: In the second passage the word Michal should be Merab, the older sister of Michal, who was married to Adriel, the Meholathite, and bare him five sons who were gibbeted to appease the wrath of the Gibeonites.

Fleeing from Saul, David rightly seeks refuge with Samuel at Ramah, and Samuel took him to Naioth of Ramah. Being banished from the king, quite naturally and appropriately he sought the prophet, and when he came to Samuel, the prophet took him from Ramah to Naioth; that means the Seminary buildings where the school of the prophets was assembled, as if we had said, "He went from Waco to Ft. Worth and to Naioth of Ft. Worth," *i.e.*, the Seminary of Ft. Worth. That is a very important passage. It refers to the buildings in which the school of the prophets assembled for instruction.

But Saul's relentless hate toward David manifested itself in this place of refuge. Hearing that David was there, he sent messengers to take him, but when the messengers came within the orbit of influence of that school of the prophets the spirit of the prophets fell on the messengers and they prophesied. This happened three times in succession. Finally Saul came himself, and it fell on him so violently that he tore off his outer clothing and in an

ecstasy of prophesying fell down in a trance before Samuel and remained in that helpless condition all night long.

The compliment to Naioth is this: A number of God's people, together studying His word, filled with His Spirit, the spiritual atmosphere of the place becomes a bar against the approach of evil. The evil-minded who come to mock remain to pray. I have seen revival meetings get to such power that emissaries of the devil, children of Belial, who would come there to break up the meeting, would be overpowered by its force. That was notably illustrated in the early days of Methodism, and particularly in the rise of the Cumberland Presbyterians. My son has given a very vivid account of that time, and of how wicked men would be seized with jerks and finally fall helpless into a trance when they attended these revival meetings.

The main points of David's next attempt at self-protection are as follows: Doubtless through Samuel's advice, David, while Saul lay in that trance, left Naioth and went back to make another appeal to Jonathan. The reason that he did this was that Jonathan, in his first intercession in behalf of David, had succeeded in pacifying the wrath of his father toward him. Their meeting is graphically described in the text. There isn't a more touching passage in any piece of history than Jonathan's solemn promise that if his father meant evil that he would inform David, and the plan they arranged to test whether Jonathan's second attempt would be successful.

With the Jews the new moon was a Sabbath, no matter on what day of the week it came, and they had a festival, and there was one just ahead. On these new moon festivals all of the official household of Saul had to be present, so it was arranged that when Saul observed that David's place was vacant at that festival and he made inquiry about it, Jonathan would say, "He asked me to give him permission to go to his brother's house and partake in the new moon sacri-



fices at home with his family," then if Saul manifested no anger, that would be a sign that David could return. So on the second day of the new moon festival, Saul looked around, and seeing David's seat empty on such an important occasion, directly asked Jonathan where he was, and Jonathan told him, according to the arrangement made with David, at which Saul became furious against Jonathan and denounced him in awful language, and when Jonathan makes his last appeal, Saul hurls a javelin at him. Jonathan, insulted, outraged, gets up and leaves the table and goes out and shows David that it will never do to return to Saul, that he must seek refuge elsewhere, and they renew their covenant. Jonathan says, "I know you will be king, and I will be next to you, and when you are king be good to my family." We will have some sad history on that later, about whether David did fulfill his solemn pledge to Jonathan to be good to Jonathan's family when David had the power.

David next seeks refuge at Nob, where the priests and the tabernacle were—not the Ark—that was at Kirjath-jearim—but the priests were assembled in the village of Nob with the high priest. David came, and did not relate to the priests the malice of Saul toward him, but came worn out, exhausted, famished with hunger, and the priest gives him to eat of the shew bread, unlawful for any but a priest to eat. The priest inquires through the Ephod what David wants to find out from Jehovah, and gives to him the sword of Goliath. You know I gave you a direction to trace that sword of Goliath's; to ascertain what became of it. It had been carried to the tabernacle at Nob, and the priest gave it to David. David left there because he saw a rascal in the crowd, Doeg, the Edomite, one of Saul's "lick-spittle" followers, and he said to the high priest, "That fellow will tell all of this to Saul when he gets back home."

The New Testament reference to that is when the Phari-

sees were springing questions on our Lord He showed them that the Sabbath law, like other laws, always had exceptions in cases of judgment, mercy and necessity. Though it be the Sabbath day when a man found an ass crushed under his burden or an ox in the ditch, he must work to relieve that poor beast, so, while it was against the law for anybody but a priest to eat the shew bread, yet, in a case of necessity, David being famished, the priest did right to give him the shew bread and he did right to eat it.

What the result? We learn that when this Doeg went back and told Saul, he sent for the whole family of the priests and they came, and he demanded why they had sheltered and fed his enemy and used the Ephod in his behalf. The high priest explained. Saul told him that everyone of them should die, but he could find no officer who would put them to death. It seemed to be sacrilegious, until Doeg, this Edomite, took great pleasure in killing the last one of them. Then Saul sent and destroyed, root and branch, women and children, the entire village and all the priests at Nob.

David's next attempt to find a refuge failed, but he succeeded later. He went to Achish, the king of the Philistines at Gath, and they were not ready to greet him. They believed that he came upon an evil mission. They said he was the man that had brought all the ruin on the Philistines, concerning whom the women sang, "Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." To preserve himself from the danger of death that threatened him he feigned madness, and so deceived the king. A North American Indian would have done the same thing. They never shoot or strike the insane, believing them under the hand of a spirit.

David's next effort at self-protection was at the cave of Adullam, and the record states that everyone that was in distress or in debt or discontented gathered unto him and he became a captain over them. Quite a number of mighty

men, the greatest fighters then known to the world, came to him. A company came to him from Judah and Benjamin; his father's household came, fearing that Saul would destroy them, so that he organized a fighting force of four hundred men that has never been equaled by the same number of men. A little later we will see that it had grown to 600 men by other accessions. All of them were heroes and great fighters. Then there came to him Abiathar, the last one of the high priest's family when Saul had destroyed the village of Nob, and there came to him some of the prophets, especially Gad, who remains with him all the time, and who wrote a part of the history we are discussing.

So that cave was the scene of the change in the fortunes of David. It makes little difference now whether he stays in Judah or goes anywhere else with that crowd back of him; nobody is able to harm him. It was at this time that he took his father and mother, who were old and couldn't move swiftly with his fighting force, over to Moab, across the Jordan, doubtless relying upon the fact that Ruth, the Moabitess, was an ancestor of his, and the king of Moab sheltered the father and mother of David; but Gad, the prophet, admonishes David to leave Moab and go back to Judah. God would take care of him in his own land if he trusted Him, and so he went back to Judah.

In view of Moab's kindness to David's family, the Jews acquit David of the severe measures adopted by him toward the Moabites at a later day, to the history of which we will come later. They say that the king of Moab murdered David's father and mother who had been left in his charge, and that David swept them with fire and sword for it when he got to them.

The great sermons in our day which have been preached on this part of David's career are: (1) Melville's sermon on David's feigning madness at the court of Achish. A remarkable sermon. (2) Spurgeon's great sermon on the

Cave of Adullam from the text, "And every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him, and he became a captain over them." Spurgeon used that to illustrate how a similar class of people gathered around Christ, and He became a captain over them. Every one that was in debt, or distress, or sick, or poverty-stricken, whatever the ailment, or in despair about the affairs of life, came to Jesus and He became a captain over them. It is a great sermon.

### QUESTIONS

1. Trace in the Old Testament the usage of the word, "teraphim," which occurs in chapter 19: 13: "And Michal took the teraphim, and laid it in the bed, and put a pillow of goat's hair at the head thereof and covered it with the clothes," answering the following questions: (1) Is the word, "teraphim," ever used in a good sense? (2) What was it? (3) Was its use a violation of the first or second commandment? (4) What is the meaning of such an image being in David's house? (5) Show how in history the use of images became a dividing line between Romanists and Protestants, and what the danger of their use, even as a help toward the worship of God.

2. What bearing has Michal's teraphim on her wifely relation to David, and what the proofs in later times? Reconcile II Sam. 6: 23 with II Sam. 21: 8.

3. Fleeing from Saul, with whom does David rightly seek refuge, and what the distinction between Ramah and Naioth in chap. 19: 18, 19?

4. How does Saul's relentless hate toward David manifest itself in this place of refuge, what the result, and what the compliment to Naioth?

5. Give the main points of David's next attempt at self-protection, show why he resorted to it, and what the issue.

6. With whom next does David seek refuge, what the main incidents, what the New Testament reference thereto, why did David leave that refuge, and what the results to the priests for sheltering him?

7. What was David's next attempt to find a refuge, why did it fail this time but succeed later, what was David's expedient to escape from the danger, and why did that expedient succeed?

8. What was David's next effort at self-protection, what accessions came to him, and what was the result on his future fortunes?

9. In view of the Moab's kindness to David's family, how do the Jews acquit David of the severe measures adopted by him toward the Moabites at a later day?

10. What great sermons in our day have been preached on this part of David's career?

### XIII

## DAVID AND HIS INDEPENDENT ARMY; THE END OF THE DUEL WITH SAUL

*Scriptures: References in Harmony, pp. 91-96*

**T**HIS section is very thrilling, containing many stirring adventures and hair-breadth escapes, showing the play of the mighty passions of love and hate, and treachery and loyalty. It contains the farewell between David and Jonathan in their last interview; the farewell between David and Saul; the death of Samuel and the engaging story of David and Abigail. No novel that I have ever read has incidents so romantic in nature as this section.

The turn in the fortunes of David comes at the Cave of Adullam. He is no longer a solitary fugitive. His helpers were:

1. An armed corps, small indeed in number, but unequaled in history as a mobile fighting force, who had gathered around him. Never before nor since have more heroes and champions been found in a band of 400, rapidly recruited to 600. As is quite natural, some of them are both desperate and evil characters. They harbor in caves or sleep under rocks, and from the mountain tops, like eagles in their eyries, survey all the mountain passes, ready to swoop down on their Philistine-prey or to make timely escape from Saul's forces, which they will not fight through David's loyalty.

2. The son of the high priest with the Ephod, fleeing from Saul's murderous slaughter of his brethren at Nob, has turned to David, supplying his greatest need, that is,



a means of communication with Jehovah, now forever denied to Saul. Through this means he easily learns what no earthly wisdom or system of espionage could discover—the very hearts and secret purposes of his enemies.

3. The school of the prophets, Jehovah's mouthpieces, are for him, and Gad, their great representative, acts as his daily counsellor—Gad who shall become one of the historians of his life.

David at this time evinced the most exalted patriotism. Though pursued by Saul's relentless hate, he never at any time, employs his fighting force against Israel, nor ever harms Saul's person, though it is twice within his power, but ever watching, he protects defenceless cities of his people by smiting their Philistine invaders, preserves the exposed farms and folds of the villages from their marauding bands. Not all Saul's army is such a defence of Israel as David's immortal 600. And this he did continuously, though every blow he struck for his people only advertised his whereabouts to Saul, and brought on immediately a man-hunt by Saul and his army. There is no parallel to these facts in history. If, when the "swamp-fox," Francis Marion, by creeping out of his secret places of retirement advertised his whereabouts by smiting a British or Tory force, Washington, Gates, Greene or Morgan had detached a flying column to cut off Marion, then that would have been a parallel.

An example of this patriotism of David, and the ungrateful return to him is found in this section. From it we learn that when David, at a hazard so great that his own dauntless champions advised against it, under the guidance of Jehovah left the safer territory of Judah and braved with his 600 the whole Philistine army to rescue Keilah, Saul, informed of his presence there, summoned his whole army to besiege David in that city, and only through timely knowledge, communicated through the high priest's Ephod, did

David escape the enmity of Saul and the purposed treachery of the men of Keilah whom he had just preserved.

A parallel in later days shows that information from Jehovah concerning the secret purposes of men eclipsed all knowledge to be derived from spies, and so saved the king of Israel. This parallel we find in II Kings 6:8-12. The king of Syria, at war with the king of Israel (by Israel in that place is meant the ten tribes that went off from Rehoboam), in private counsel with his officers, would designate a place where he would establish his camps in order to entrap the king of Israel. As soon as he had designated where these trap-camps would be placed, Elisha, God's prophet, sent information to the king of Israel to beware of these places, and thus more than twice the king of Israel was saved. The king of Syria supposed that there was a traitor in his own camp, and wanted to know who it was that betrayed every movement that he made. One of his counsellors replied that there was no traitor in his camp, but that Elisha, God's prophet, knew every secret thought of the king's bed-chamber.

I now call attention to the text-difficulty in I Sam. 23:6. The text here says that Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, had joined David at Keilah, but chapter 22:20-23 shows that Abiathar had previously joined David at the Cave of Adullam. The context just above verse 6 shows that David had inquired of the high priest as to whether he should go to the rescue of Keilah. The word, "Keilah," in verse 6 ought therefore to be struck out, or else ought to follow the text of the Septuagint, which reads this way: "And it came to pass when Abiathar, the son of Ahimelech, fled to David, that he went down with David to Keilah with the Ephod in his hand." That makes complete sense and retains the word "Keilah."

David's next refuge from Saul, the description of Saul's pursuit, and Jehovah's deliverance, are described in just

two verses of the text, 23:14, 15: "And David abode in the wilderness in strongholds and remained in the wilderness of Ziph, and Saul sought him every day, but God delivered him not into Saul's hands. And David saw that Saul was come out to seek his life, and David was in the wilderness of Ziph in a wood." That does not mean any big trees. It means thick brush—scrubby brush—as may be seen on West Texas mountains—shin-oak thickets. I have seen them so thick it looked like one couldn't stick a butcher knife in them, and woe to the man who tried to ride through them!

Just here comes Jonathan's last interview with David, which is given in three verses, 23:16-18. While Saul is every day beating that brush to find David and can't find him, Jonathan finds him and comes to show him that he has no part in this murderous pursuit of his friend; comes to tell him that both he and his father know that David will triumph and become king, and to make a covenant with him again that when he is king he will remember Jonathan's house.

Let us now take up David's first escape from the treachery of the Ziphites, and how that escape was commemorated. Saul couldn't find David in that wood, but the Ziphites (for it was in the wood of Ziph) knew where he was, and they told Saul where he was, and so Saul, guided by these treacherous Ziphites, summoned an army, completely surrounded the whole country, and at last got David, as it were, in a *cul-de-sac*. That French phrase means, to follow a road where all egress is blocked, forward or sideways. So there was just a mountain between Saul and David, and Saul's army was all around and closing in. The deliverance comes providentially. Word is brought to Saul that the Philistines are striking at some place in his territory, and he has to call his army off just before he closes up the trap around David and go and fight the Philistines; and your record says that

place is renamed in commemoration this simple word, "Sella-hammahlekoth," which means "the rock of escape." If you were to visit the place the guide will show you today "Sella-hammahlekoth"—the rock of escape.

David's next refuge from Saul was at the town of Engedi. The name is today preserved in the Aramaic form, "Ain Jidy." It is thought to be the oldest town in the world. The Genesis record of the days of Abraham says that Chedor-laomer led his army by Engedi. It was a town whose inhabitants saw the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, lying right below in the valley. It has been passed by a thousand armies. It means the "fountain of goats." Bursting out of the mountain side is a spring of considerable volume, and from that flows the stream "Engedi," which, with two others, makes a little oasis there just above the Dead Sea—one of the most beautiful in the world; the finest vines, the most beautiful palm trees, and right up above, on the mountain side, are hundreds of caves, some of them so deep that they are as dark as the pit right at the mouth. A man standing in the light at the entrance cannot see anything within, but one hidden back a little distance can see distinctly anybody coming in. Nearly everybody that visits the Holy Land makes a pilgrimage to these famous caves, and if you are disposed to read the results of modern research with reference to the place you will find some very fine references in the following books: Thompson's "Land and the Book," from which we have had quotations; Robinson's "Researches in Bible Lands;" Tristan's "Land of Israel;" and one of the best is McGarvey's "Travels in the Holy Land." McGarvey is a Disciples theologian in Kentucky, and his is about the best book on the Holy Land extant. You will also find a very graphic account of these caves in Stanley's "Sinai and Palestine." The record tells us that Saul, in pursuit of David, while his army is scattered about searching for him, comes to one of these caves, and enters

in, and David is in there at the time with some of his bravest men, and he, being in the dark, can see Saul plainly, and slips up and cuts off a piece of Saul's cloak. One of his men wants him to kill Saul: "Now is your chance; this is the chance God has promised you; your enemy is in your power; smite him." But David would not do so. When Saul goes out of the cave David slips to the front, and from a high rock holds up that piece of skirt and calls to Saul, your text telling better than I can the thrilling way he reproached Saul for his pursuit of him, that he has never done him any harm, and that Saul was pursuing him to death without any cause.

We now come to a strange but certainly true thing. I will read what David said and Saul's reply. It is Saul's reply that I want you to particularly notice. David said, "Wherefore hearest thou men's words saying, Behold David seeketh thy hurt," then closes up by saying, "The Lord judge between me and thee, and the Lord avenge me of thee, but my hand shall not be upon thee." Listen at Saul's reply: "Thou art more righteous than I"—standing there weeping now and saying this—"for that thou hast rewarded me good, whereas I have rewarded thee evil; and thou hast showed this day how that thou hast dealt well with me, forasmuch as when the Lord had delivered me into thy hand thou killedst me not; for if a man findest his enemy, will he let him go well away; wherefore the Lord reward thee good for what thou hast done unto me this day. And now, behold I know well that thou shalt surely be king and that the kingdom of Israel shall be established in thine hand; swear thou therefore, unto me by the Lord that thou wilt not cut off my seed after me, and that thou wilt not destroy my name out of my father's house." That sounded like penitence, but it was not. If it was you would not see Saul pursuing him again, but it was temporary remorse, such as wicked men often evince. It is an Oriental cus-



tom that when a new king comes in he kills all the family of the one he succeeds, and that is what Saul fears, and David never did kill any of them after he became king.

It is evident from 24:9 and 26:19 that some persistent, insidious slanderer, ever at Saul's side, kept his wrath stirred up against David, and like a sinister Iago played upon Saul's weakness, ever fanning by whisperings the flame of his jealousy. You would never know the name of this secret assassin of character from the history. But his name and character are pilloried in the immortal songs of his would-be victim, and all the vileness of his demoniacal nature memorialized to the end of time. What is his name, and in what song commemorated? Just at this juncture Samuel, the great prophet—the greatest man next to Moses since Abraham's day, dies. Later we will have an analysis of his character.

An example of David's protection of the villages and farms is seen in the case of the rich man named Nabal ("Nabal" means "fool"), about whom his wife says later, "His name is Nabal and he is Nabal." There wouldn't have been a sheep left in his flock nor a cow left to give him milk but for the protection extended by David's band. The herdsmen say, "David's band has been a wall about us." David's men never took any of his property. Hungry though they were, they never killed one of his sheep nor one of his cattle. Passing bands of marauders would have swept away every vestige of his property, but David's men beat them off.

Now, on a festival, sheep-shearing day, David's men, being weary and hungry, David sends ten men to Nabal, giving him an opportunity to at least feed one time the men that had protected him for the year, and Nabal's reply is: "What is the son of Jesse to me that I should take my property and feed his straggling crowd?" There are such

rich men now, and no wonder they are hated. There was a time in the early history of Texas when volunteer rangers protected all the exposed settlements with their flocks and herds. A man whose home and stock had been so preserved, who would deny hospitality to the unpaid rangers would have been held as infamous. Indeed, in all our West Texas history there never was one Nabal.

These ten men went back and reported to David, and this time he didn't consult either priest or prophet, but, boiling over in wrath, announced his purpose of not leaving a man alive in Nabal's entire household, and goes to smite him with 400 of his picked men. One of the servants of Nabal had apprehended just such a state of affairs and had told Abigail, the wife of Nabal, whereupon she, recognizing David as God's anointed, as the champion of Israel, as the one about whom all true souls should be thinking, having faith in the promises of God concerning him, took a magnificent donation and hurried with it and met David coming blazing in wrath. The woman leaped down from the beast she was riding and made a speech that has never yet had an equal.

You remember how I called your attention to the famous speech in Scott's "Heart of Midlothian" by Jeanie Deans, but this beats that. I haven't time to analyze the speech; you have the record of it before you, but there never was more wisdom put into a few words. She shows David that the wrong done is inexcusable, but tells him to charge it to her, although she had nothing to do with it; tells him that so great a man as he is, God's vicegerent, should not take vengeance in his own hands; that the day will come in his later life when he will look back with regret at the blood on his hands if he takes such a vengeance, and asks him to leave Nabal's punishment to God. David was charmed with her and did everything she said. She went back home sad at heart, as many a good woman married to a bad man has

to do. Nabal was on a spree. She didn't tell him anything until the next morning, and as she told him what had transpired God smote him with apoplexy and a few days later—about ten days—smote him again so that he died, whereupon David sends for Abigail and marries her and at the same time marries another woman, plurality of wives prevailing in that day. Many preachers have preached sermons, some of them foolish and some of them really great, on "Nabal, the churl."

The incidents of the last meeting of Saul and David are pathetic. The Ziphites conspire again against David, and tell Saul where to find him. David sends out his spies and learns of Saul's approach and easily evades him; then, taking just one man with him, Abishai, the fiery son of his sister Zeruiah, his nephew (you will hear about him oftentimes later), goes into the camp of Saul with his 3,000 picked veterans. Saul is sleeping, and Abner, his great general, sleeping by him, and Abishai, following his nature, says, "Now let me kill him." David says, "No, you shall not strike him; he is the anointed king; leave him to God," and simply took Saul's spear and cruse—his water vessel—and when he had got out of the camp he cried out to Abner and mocked him: "What a guardian of your king, that you let somebody come right into your camp and come right up to the person of your king! Behold the spear and cruse of Saul! You ought to be ashamed of yourself." Saul hears David, and now comes that strange language again. I want you to notice it again: "And Saul knew David's voice, and said, 'Is this thy voice, my son David?' (as you know, David was his son-in-law). And David said, 'It is my voice, my lord, O king.' And he said, 'Wherefore doth my lord pursue after his servant? for what have I done? or what evil is in mine hand? Now therefore, I pray thee, let my lord the king hear the words of his servant. If Jehovah hath stirred thee up against me let Him

accept an offering: but if it be the children of men, cursed be they before Jehovah.’”

Now comes a passage that we will have to explain in the next chapter: “For they have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of Jehovah, saying, Go, serve other gods. Now therefore, let not my blood fall to the earth before the face of Jehovah, for the king of Israel is come to seek a flea, as when one doth hunt a partridge in the mountains.” This is a very undignified thing for a king to do—to go out flea-hunting; go to chasing a partridge. “Partridge” there is what we call a “blue quail.” They seldom fly, but they can run, and anyone who hunts them has to be very fast; hence the beauty of the illustration. Saul says, “I have sinned.” (You remember he said that to Samuel.) “Return, my son David, for I will no more do thee harm, because my soul was precious in thine eyes this day, and behold I have played the fool, and have erred exceedingly.” David didn’t trust him. Saul concludes, “Blessed be thou, my son, David; for thou shalt both do great things and also shalt prevail.” So David went his own way, and Saul returned to his place. They never meet again. The pursuit is ended. We end this chapter with the end of the duel between Saul and David.

### QUESTIONS

1. What is the interest of this section?
2. From what point and place comes the turn in the fortunes of David, and who were his helpers?
3. How does David at this time evince the most exalted patriotism?
4. What parallel in history to these facts?
5. Cite an example of this patriotism of David, and show the ungrateful return to him?
6. Cite a parallel in later days to show that information from Jehovah concerning the secret purposes of men eclipsed all knowledge to be derived from spies, and so saved the king of Israel.
7. Explain the text-difficulty in I Sam. 23: 6.
8. Where was David’s next refuge from Saul, what the description of Saul’s pursuit, and what Jehovah’s deliverance?
9. Describe Jonathan’s last interview with David.

10. Describe David's first escape from the treachery of the Ziphites, and how that escape was commemorated.
11. What was David's next refuge from Saul, what the history of the place, and what has modern research to say about it?
12. What the events there, and what illustrations therefrom?
13. What man, greatest next to Moses since Abraham's day, dies at this juncture?
14. Cite an example of David's protection of the villages and farms, giving the main incidents in the thrilling story of David and Abigail, and illustrate by Texas free rangers.
15. Describe the incidents of the last meeting of Saul and David.



## XIV

### ZIKLAG, ENDOR AND GILBOA

*Scriptures:* References in Harmony, pp. 96-102

LET us analyze David's sin of despair, and give the train of sins and embarrassments that follow. The first line tells us of his sin of despair, I Sam. 27:1: "And David said in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul." It is a sad thing to appear in the life of David, this fit of the "blues" that came on him, and was utterly unjustifiable. In fact, he is done with Saul forever. Saul will never harm him again, and he is very late in fearing that he will one day perish by the hand of Saul. It reminds us of Elijah under the juniper tree, praying that he might die in his despair, when God never intended him to die at all—but to take him to heaven without death. It was unjustifiable because the promises to him were that he should be king, and he should not have supposed that God's word would fail. It is unjustifiable because up to this time he had been preserved from every attack of Saul, and the argument in his mind should be, "I will be preserved unto the end."

The distrust of God sometimes comes to the best people. I don't claim to be among the best people. I am an average kind of a man, trying my level best to do right, and generally optimistic—and no man is ever whipped until he is whipped inside, and it is a very rare thing that I am whipped inside. Whenever I am it lasts a very short time. I don't stay whipped long. But we may put it down as worthy of consideration in our future life that whenever we get into the

state of mind the Israelites were in about the Canaanites—that we are “mere grasshoppers in their sight and in our own sight,” then our case is pitiable. Let us never take the grasshopper view of ourselves.

That was the first sin, the succumbing of his faith; the temporary eclipsing of his faith. The next sin is this: “There is nothing better for me than that I should escape into the land of the Philistines.” Had he forgotten about God? Had he forgotten that he had tried that Philistine crowd once and had to get away from there without delay? Had he forgotten when he went over into Moab and was told by the prophet to get back to his own country? God would take care of him. That sin is the child of the other.

His third sin was that before taking such a decisive step he didn't ask God—a very unusual thing for him. Generally when anything perplexed him he called for the Ephod and the high priest and asked the Lord what he should do, but he is so unnerved through fear of Saul that he does not stop to ask what God has to say, and so that is a twin to the second sin, that was born of the original one. Without consulting anybody he gathers up his followers with their women, children and everything that they have, and goes down to Gath, and there commits his next sin. He makes an alliance with the king of Gath and becomes tributary to him.

That in turn leads to another sin. He is bound to fight against the enemies of God's cause, and so, occupying a town, Ziklag, bestowed upon him by the Philistine king, he marches out secretly and makes war on the Geshurites and Gizzites and Amalekites, and for fear that somebody would be spared to tell the Philistines that he was killing their allies, he kills them all, men, women, and children. Now, if he had been carrying out a plan of Jehovah he would have been justified, but the record says that he did

it for fear that if he left any one of them alive they would report the fact to King Achish of Gath.

His next sin is to tell a lie about it. We call it "duplicity," but it was a sure-enough lie. He made the impression on Achish's mind when he went out on this expedition that he was going against Judah, which pleased the Philistine king very much, for if he was fighting against Judah, then Judah would hate him and the breach would be widened between him and his own people.

We now come to another sin. Each sin leads to another. The Philistines determined to make a decisive war against Saul, and not to approach him in the usual way, but to follow up the boundary of the Mediterranean Sea and strike across through the very center of Palestine and cut the nation in two from the valley of Esdraelon. So Achish says to David, "You must go with us. You are our guest and ally and occupying a town I gave you." So David marches along with his dauntless 600, and evidently against the will of his own men, as we will see later. He does go with the Philistines to the very battlefield, and when they get there the Philistines, seeing that he is with the court of the king, object to his presence and will not allow him to go to the battle with them. So he returned to the land of the Philistines.

I have no idea that he ever intended to strike a blow against Saul. I feel perfectly sure of it. When the battle was raging he would have attacked the Philistines in the flank with his 600 men, but he made the impression on the mind of the king that he would fight with them against Saul. The providence of God kept him from committing that sin.

These are the six sins resulting from getting into the wrong place just one time. I don't say he won't get into the place again, but this time he certainly was cowed. A man can't commit just one sin. A sin can outbreed an

Australian rabbit. The hunter sometimes thinks he sees just one quail, but whenever he flushes him, behold there is a pair or maybe a covey! There is a proverb that whoever tells a lie ought to have a good memory, else he will tell some more covering that one up, forgetting his first statement. I am sorry to bring out this charge against David, but I will have a much bigger one to bring out before we are done with him. He is one of the best men that ever lived, but all the good men that I know have their faults.

*I have never yet been blest with the sight of a sinless man. I know there are some people who claim to be perfect and sinless, but I don't know any who really are.*

A great modern sermon was preached on this despair of David, taking that first line as a text: "I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul." The preacher was John McNeil, who is called the "modern Spurgeon." He has charge of one of the liveliest churches in London and has published several volumes of sermons. This is the first in one of his books, and it is a great one.

This sin of David was punished in two ways. While he was off following the Philistines to the battlefield, these same Amalekites that he had been troubling so much, swooped down on Ziklag—the town given to David by Achish—and there being no defenders present, nobody but the women and children, they burned the town. They didn't kill any one, but they took all the women and the children and the livestock and the furniture and everything—made as clean a sweep as you ever saw, including both of David's wives, Ahinoam and Abigail. The second punishment was that his own men, who didn't want to go up with the Philistines, wanted to stone him for what had happened when he was gone. His life was in danger.

But he recovered himself from this sin. When he saw the destruction of Ziklag and the temper of his men, the text says that David "greatly encouraged his heart in God

and called for the high priest and the Ephod." What a pity he hadn't called for him sooner! But God is quick to answer readily, and forgive His erring children, and to put away their sin, and the answer comes through the Ephod to David's questions: "Shall I pursue after this troop? Shall I overtake them?" and God's answer comes as quick as lightning, "Pursue them, for you shall overtake them and you shall recover all." That was a very fine reply for a sinner to get when his trouble arose from his own sin, and so he does pursue them with his 600 men, and David in pursuit of a foe was like the Texas rangers. If a man's horse gave out they left it. If a man himself gave out they left him. They just kept pursuing until they found and struck the enemy. That was the way with David.

A third of his force, 200 of his brave men, when they got to a certain stream of water, could not go any further. He had to leave them and go with just 400 men. Out in the desert he finds a slave of one of the Amalekites, an Egyptian, starving to death. He had had nothing to eat for three days. David fed him, and asked him if he would guide them to the camp of the Amalekites. He said he would if they would never let his master get him again, and David came upon them while they were feasting and rejoicing over the great spoils. He killed all of them except about 400 young men who rode on camels. They got away. Camels are hard to overtake by infantry. They are very swift. And your record says that David recovered every man, woman and child and every stick of furniture, besides all the rich spoils these desert pirates had been gathering in for quite a while, cattle and stock of every kind.

David made the following judicious uses of the victory:

1. On the return, when they got to where those 200 were left behind, certain tough characters in his army did not want the 200 men to share in the spoils. They could have



their wives and children, but nothing else. David not only refused to follow that plan, but established a rule dating from that time, that whoever stayed behind with the baggage must share equally with those that went to the front. These men did not want to stay, but they couldn't go any further.

At the battle of San Jacinto Houston had to sternly detail a certain number of his men to keep the camp, and they wept because they were not allowed to go into the battle. Those men that were detailed to stay in camp ought to be counted as among the victors of the battle of San Jacinto, and history so counts them.

2. The second judicious use that he made of the spoils captured from these Amalekites was to send large presents to quite a number of the southern cities of Judah that had been friendly to him and his men. He was always a generous-hearted man. That made a good deal of capital for David. Even had he been acting simply as a politician, that was the wisest thing he could have done. But he simply followed his heart.

There were great accessions to David at Ziklag. The text tells us, I Chron. 12: 1-7, that there were about twenty-three mighty men, some of whom were Benjamites, who had come from Saul's tribe, and they were right-handed and left-handed. They could shoot an arrow with either hand. They could use either hand to sling a stone, and among these twenty-three were some of the most celebrated champions of single combat ever known in the world's history. One of them, Jashobeam, in one fight killed 300 men with one spear.

#### SAUL AND THE WITCH OF ENDOR

It is important for us to note just here the Mosaic law against necromancy, or an appeal to the dead by the living through a medium, *i.e.*, a wizard, if a man, or a witch, if

a woman, and wherein lies the sin of necromancy, which relates exclusively to trying to gather information from the dead. The law of Moses, in the book of Deuteronomy, is very explicit that no Israelite should ever try to gather information from the dead through a wizard or a witch, and the reason is that hidden things belong to God and revealed things to us and our children. The only lawful way to information concerning what lies beyond the grave is an appeal to Jehovah, and if God does not disclose it, let it alone. The prophetic teaching on this subject is found in the famous passage in Isaiah: "Woe to them that seek to wizards and witches that chirp and mutter. Why should the living seek unto the dead instead of unto the living God?"

Early in his reign Saul had rigidly enforced the Mosaic law putting the wizards and witches to death, or driving them out of the country.

There are several theories of interpretation concerning the transaction in I Sam. 28: 11-19, but I will discuss only three of them. Saul himself goes to the witch of Endor and asks her to call up Samuel, making an inquiry of the dead through a medium, wanting information that God had refused to give him. These are the theories:

1. Some hold that there was no appearance of Samuel himself nor an impersonation of him by an evil spirit; that there was nothing supernatural, but only a trick of imposture by the witch, like many modern tricks by mediums and spirit rappers, and that the historian merely records what appeared to be on the surface. That is the first theory. That is the theory of the radical critics, who oppose everything supernatural, and you know without my telling you what my opinion is of that theory. There are indeed many tricks of imposture by pretended fortune tellers, and some of them are marvelous, but such impostures do not account for all the facts.

2. Others hold that there was a real appearance of Samuel, but the witch didn't bring him up; she was as much, if not more, startled than Saul when he came; that God himself interfered, permitting Samuel to appear to the discomfiture of the witch, who cried out when she saw him, and to pronounce final judgment on Saul. They quote in favor of this theory Ezek. 14:3, 7, 8: "Son of man, these men have taken their idols into their heart, and put the stumbling block of their iniquity before their face: should I be inquired of at all by them? . . . For every one of the house of Israel, or of the strangers that sojourn in Israel, that separateth himself from me, and taketh his idols into his heart, and putteth the stumbling block of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet to inquire for himself of me; I, Jehovah, will answer him by myself; and I will set my face against that man, and will make him an astonishment, for a sign and a proverb, and I will cut him off from the midst of my people." They interpret this passage to mean that when a man violated God's law, as Saul and this witch did, that God took it upon himself to answer, and answered through Samuel.

That theory is the Jewish view throughout the ages. According to the Septuagint rendering of I Chron. 10:13, "Saul asked counsel of her that had a familiar spirit, and Samuel made answer to him." It further appears to be the Jewish view by the apocryphal book Ecclesiasticus 46:20, which says, "After his death Samuel prophesied and showed the king his end, and lifted up his voice from the earth in prophecy." The Jewish view further appears in Josephus, who thinks that Samuel was really there, but that God sent him; not that the witch had brought him up or could do it. This view was adopted by many early Christian writers; for example, Justin Martyr, Origen and Augustine, all great men, and this view is held more and more by modern commentators, among them, for instance, Edersheim, in his

"History of Israel," and Kirkpatrick in the Cambridge Bible, and Blakie in the Expositor's Bible, and Taylor in his "History of David and His Times." All those books I have recommended; they all take that second view.

3. Now here is the third theory of interpretation. First, there is such a thing as necromancy, in which, through mediums possessed of evil spirits, which spirits do impersonate the dead and do communicate with the living. This theory holds that the case of Saul and the witch of Endor is in point—that an evil spirit (for this woman is said to have had a familiar spirit; she was possessed with an evil spirit, and the business of these evil spirits in their demoniacal possession is to impersonate dead people;) caused the semblance of Samuel to appear and speak through his mouth. This theory claims that the scripture in Job 3:17, to wit: "When the good man dies he goes where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest," could be violated if this had really been Samuel, who said, "Wherefore hast thou disquieted me?" And whoever this man was that appeared did say that.

If God had sent him he could not very well have used that language. God had a right to do as He pleased, but Saul had no right to try to call back a dead man to get information from him. This theory also claims that the prophecy pronounced by that semblance of Samuel was not true, but it would have been true if Samuel had said it. That prophecy says, "Tomorrow thou and thy sons shall be with me," but Saul didn't die until three days later; on the third day the battle of Gilboa was fought, and that Samuel, neither dead nor alive, would have told a falsehood. Very many early Christian writers adopt this theory, among them Tertullian and Jerome, the author of the Vulgate or Latin version of the Bible, and nearly all of the reformers, Luther, Calvin and all those mighty minds that wrought out the reformation. They took the position that the evil

spirit simulated Samuel. Those who hold to this theory further say that unless this is an exception, nowhere else in the Word of God is any man who died mentioned as coming back with a message to the living except the Lord; that He is the first to bring life and immortality to light through the gospel after He had abolished death. They do not believe that the circumstances in this case warrant an exception to the rule that applies to the whole Bible, and particularly they quote the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. The rich man asks that Lazarus might go back to the other world with a message to his brethren, and it was refused on the ground that they have Moses and the prophets, and if a man won't hear Moses and the prophets neither would he hear though one rose from the dead. That makes a strong case.

Certainly the first theory is not true, and the other two theories are advocated with such plausibility and force that I will leave you to take whatever side you please. My own opinion is that Samuel was not there, but on a matter of this kind let us not be dogmatic. Let us do our own thinking and we will be in good company no matter which of these last theories we adopt.

A great many years ago, when spirit rapping was sweeping over the country, it was a custom among Methodist preachers to tell about visitations they had from the dead, and warnings that they had received, and J. R. Graves fought it. He said that it was against the written law of God, the law of Moses and the prophets and our Lord and His apostles, and that we didn't need any revelations from dead people, whereupon a Methodist preacher named Watson challenged him to debate the question and they did debate it. Graves stood on this position: There isn't a case in the Bible where one who died was allowed to come back with a message to the living but Jesus only, and He is the only traveler that has ever returned from that bourne



to throw light on the state of the dead. In the debate, of course, the central case was that of Saul, the witch of Endor and Samuel. If Watson couldn't maintain himself on that it was not worth while to go to any other case. Watson quoted the appearance of Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration. Graves said, "Yes. They did appear, but they had no message for living people; none for the apostles." Then he finally made all of his fight on this case. I read the debate with great interest. It was published, but it is out of print.

## GILBOA

The description of the battle and the results are so explicit in the text that I refer the reader to the Bible account of this great battle. But we need to reconcile I Sam. 31:4, 5, 6, and I Chron. 10:4, 5, 6. Both of these assert that Saul committed suicide—fell on his sword and died—and that he did die, with II Sam. 1:6-10, where that Amalekite who brought the news to David of the battle says that he found Saul wounded, and that Saul asked the Amalekite to kill him, and that the Amalekite did kill him. The Amalekite brought also to David a bracelet and a crown that belonged to Saul. You are asked to reconcile these two statements. Did Saul commit suicide? We know he tried to do it, but did he actually commit suicide, or did that Amalekite, after Saul fell on his sword, find him still alive and kill him? My answer is that the Amalekite lied. The record clearly says that Saul did kill himself, and his armor-bearer saw that he was dead, and every reference in the scriptures is to the death by his own hand except this one. This Amalekite, knowing that Saul and David were in a measure rivals, supposed that he might ingratiate himself with David if he could bring evidence that he had killed Saul.

There is no doubt that this Amalekite was there and found Saul's body, and no doubt he stripped that dead

body of the bracelet and the crown, but his story was like the story of Joe in the "Wild Western Scenes." An Indian had been killed, stabbed through the heart, and the heart blood gushing all over the man who slew him. The fight was so hot that Joe, being a coward, stayed there fighting the dead Indian, and so they found him there stabbing and saying that the man that had first stabbed him through thought he had killed him, but that he was not dead and had got up and attacked him, and he had been having a desperate fight with the Indian.

The news of this battle sadly affected Jonathan's son. Everybody that heard of the battle started to flee across the Jordan, and the nurse picked up Jonathan's child and in running dropped him and he fell, and became a cripple for life. We will have some very interesting things about this crippled child after a while.

The gratitude and heroism of the men of Jabesh-Gilead is worthy of note.

The Philistines had cut off Saul's head and sent it back to the house of their god, and took his armor and hung up his body and the body of his son Jonathan and the bodies of the two brothers of Jonathan on the wall of Beth-shan, and when the men of Jabesh-gilead (who had been delivered by Saul as the first act of his reign, and who always remembered him with gratitude) heard that Saul was killed, they sent out that night their bravest men and took those bodies down, carried them over the Jordan, burned them enough to escape recognition, and buried their bones under a tree. A long time afterwards David had the bones brought and buried in the proper place. I always think kindly of those men of Jabesh-gilead.

David's lament over Saul and Jonathan is found in II Sam. i. That lamentation, expressed in the text, is one of the most beautiful elegaic poems in the literature of the world. It is found on page 10 of the text-book. It is

not a religious song. It is a funeral song, an elegy, afterwards called "The Bow," and David had "the song of the bow" taught to Israel, referring to Jonathan's bow. I give just a little of it:

"Ye daughters of Israel, weep over Saul,  
Who clothed you in scarlet delicately,  
Who put ornaments of gold upon your apparel.  
How are the mighty fallen in the midst of the battle!"

Now the tribute to Jonathan:

"Jonathan is slain upon thy high places.  
I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan:  
Very pleasant hast thou been unto me.  
Thy love to me was wonderful,  
Passing the love of women."

Every admirer of good poetry bears tribute to this exquisite gem, and it has this excellency: It forgets the faults and extols the virtues of the dead. Saul had done many mighty things. That part of Gray's Elegy, "No further seek his merits to disclose," compares favorably with this. It is the only elegy equal to David's.

### QUESTIONS

1. Analyze David's sin of despair, and in order, the train of sins and embarrassments that follow.
2. What great modern sermon was preached on the despair of David, taking this line for a text: "I shall one day perish by the hand of Saul?"
3. How was this sin of David punished?
4. How does he recover himself from this sin?
5. What judicious uses of the victory did he make?
6. What great accessions to David at Ziklag?
7. What the Mosaic law against necromancy, or an appeal to the dead by the living through a medium, *i. e.*, a wizard, if a man, or a witch, if a woman, and wherein lies the sin of necromancy?
8. What the prophetic teaching on this subject?
9. What had Saul done to enforce the Mosaic law?
10. What theories of interpretation concerning the transaction in I Sam. 28: 11-19?
11. Describe the battle of Gilboa and the results.
12. Reconcile I Sam. 31: 4, 5, 6 and I Chron. 10: 4, 5, and 6.
13. How did the news of the battle affect Jonathan's son?
14. Describe the gratitude and heroism of the men of Jabesh-gilead.
15. How did David lament over Saul and Jonathan, II Sam. 1?

## XV

### HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO II SAMUEL AND I CHRONICLES

**T**HE Biblical sources of material for a history of the reign of David is found in II Samuel and I Chronicles. Apart from these two books, the Biblical material for an interpretation of this history is: (1) The Psalter; (2) The utterances of the prophets; (3) New Testament comment.

The two Biblical histories of David's reign are independent histories, composed by different authors, far separated in time from each other, and with quite distinct purposes. II Samuel was written by contemporaneous prophets, very often witnesses and participators in the events related. Their purpose is to give a simple, connected history of so many of the events in David's life as will reveal the man, and so much of the monarchy as bears upon the idea of a theocratic monarchy in its relation to the kingdom of God. All material irrelevant to that purpose is omitted. Inspiration guides them in the selection of the matter recorded and in the rejection of the matter omitted, but I Chronicles was written by Ezra after the downfall of the monarchy and with a view to establish, on a right foundation, the hierarchy which succeeds the monarchy, and to comfort the Jews of the Restoration who have no earthly king or earthly kingdom by turning their minds toward the coming of a visible but spiritual kingdom to be set up by David's great Descendant, the Lord from heaven. While it is as real a history as II Samuel, its purpose is more distinctly didactic and philosophical.

The author of Chronicles, with the book of Samuel before him, copies many passages word for word, or, where it suits his purpose better, follows the substance with a slight variation in detail. In many other instances, and at a great length, he uses material from original prophetic sources preserved nowhere else in the Bible, citing the names of the prophetic authors. This great bulk of additional matter in Chronicles, while old in its origin, is new in its use, and is essential to the purpose of the author in preparing the people for the change from monarchy to hierarchy. On this account also he omits matters quite important to the purpose of the historian of the book of Samuel, but irrelevant to his own; for example, the history of David's reign over Judah alone; the war with the house of Saul; David's kindness to Mephibosheth, Jonathan's son; David's adultery and its punishment; the history of Absalom's rebellion; the execution of Saul's sons; David's thanksgiving and last words. None of these is in Chronicles. These omissions, when considered with the omissions of so many thrilling events in David's early life and his outlaw life, already noticed, show plainly that the Samuel-book is more the life of *the man*, while Chronicles is more the history of the *monarchy*. So, later, Chronicles will omit the entire history of the defection under Jeroboam and the history of the several dynasties of the seceding ten tribes, and confine itself to the line of David and the unity of the nation and monarchy in Judah, carefully reciting the return to Judah of representatives of all the seceding ten tribes, showing clearly that while the bulk of revolting tribes were lost in the fall of the Northern kingdom and so go out of history, yet these tribes were preserved and perpetuated in the return of their remnants to Judah. Therefore Chronicles gives not a thought to the useless modern question, "What became of the lost ten tribes?"

*Neither it nor any subsequent Bible book knows anything*



*of lost tribes. The tribes were not lost any more than they were lost in the thirty-eight years of the wilderness wanderings where a generation perished, but the tribes survived. They count all the tribes preserved in the remnants that came back to Judah.*

Chronicles pays no attention to their history while apart, but is very careful to report their return. Precisely for the same reasons Chronicles barely touches Saul's history, or the history of his children after him, seeing that the monarchy is not perpetuated in Saul's line, but is very careful to catalogue the warriors coming from Saul's kingdom to David at Adullam and Ziklag, and the mighty hosts from all the tribes who came to Hebron to make him king over all Israel, and gives such details of the plague threatening the national life, and hence as bearing on the hierarchy after the downfall of the monarchy.

Chronicles records the elaborate details not elsewhere found of the arrangements on the occasion of the translation of the Ark to Jerusalem. It gives two whole chapters to that and part of another. It gives an entire chapter to David's preparation of the temple material. It gives several entire chapters to the elaborate organization of the priests and the Levites, the army and the civil service, and to the national assembly at Solomon's accession. A restatement of all of these things of the past was intensely helpful toward the establishment and perpetuity of the hierarchy after the monarchy is gone.

The chronology in II Samuel and I Chronicles is simply the chronology of the reign of David. The period of time covered by these two books touching David is forty years. After profound study, the harmonist, as shown in the text-book, gives his conception of the time order of the events. It is a big problem, but I think you may more safely rely, at least substantially, on the order in the Cambridge Bible, which I cite, using my own words:

1. The reign of David at Hebron, seven and a half years, *i. e.*, from B. C. 1055 to 1048.

2. The date of Absalom's birth somewhere between B. C. 1052 and 1050.

3. The reign of Ish-bosheth, and the civil war with the house of Saul, B. C. 1050-1048.

4. The reign of David at Jerusalem after that period extends from B. C. 1048 to 1015.

5. The period of the foreign wars comes next, about 10 years, *i. e.*, from B. C. 1045 to 1035.

6. The date of David's sin with Bath-sheba, 1035.

7. The outrage of Amnon the very next year, 1034.

8. Absalom's rebellion, which grows out of it, B. C. 1023.

9. The period of tranquillity and national growth from B. C. 1023 to 1015.

10. The date of the great plague in 1018.

11. David's death, 1015.

I have changed the Cambridge order somewhat, but my study on it has been profound, both in original investigation and in the examination of a great many books. That is about the time-order of the events contained in these two books. I could give my argument for it, but that would take up a great deal of space.

This Old Testament history, as well as all other Old Testament history, differs from secular history in three particulars: (1) In the subject matter, in that it is a history of the special training and discipline of God's chosen people; (2) In its giving events as God sees them and not as man sees them; (3) In the selection of the material it uses, putting in nothing that does not bear upon the whole plan of the Old Testament as the preparation for the New.

A writer of United States history would not think of leaving out the details of seven or eight great wars, but this sacred historian leaves out any number of them, since

these details have no relation to the great purpose of the historian. I am quite sure that one should not study this history as he studies secular history.

*It must be studied as the record of the divine preparation for the incarnation of the Son of God. The whole of the Old Testament is a preparation for the New. The Old Testament not only contains prophecies, but the whole history itself is a prophecy.*

The elements of this preparation are: (1) The discipline and training of the chosen nation that it might be the home of the Son of God when He came; (2) The development of the ideas involving the offices of the Messiah—what the Messiah was to be when He came—Sacrifice, Prophet, Priest, King, and Judge. The main contribution of II Samuel and I Chronicles is toward the king idea. In Genesis, Exodus and Leviticus the sacrifices point to the mission of the Son of God to be a sacrifice for sin, and also to His being the priest through whom atonement is effected. I Samuel contributes the additional idea of the prophet. These books will put before us the king, and when the Messiah comes He is to come as King—the King of kings and Lord of lords, and when we study them we study them in view of their Messianic forecast. These two books contribute to the Messianic idea also. In David we certainly find a prophet. He is one of the greatest prophets of the Old Testament. In David we certainly find a king, exercising priestly functions, though not belonging to the tribe of Levi. In other words, he is a king and priest. In David we find the high ideal of the king—prophet, priest and king, and these books bring that out clearly.

So far in the history of David we have learned simply his preparation to be king. We have seen that preparation: (1) In his shepherd life. (2) In his long novitiate of suffering in his outlaw life. The man has been trained physically, mentally, morally. How often have I said to young

preachers, "Only prepared men accomplish great things, and a preacher can make no more hurtful mistake than to suppose that it is a waste of time and money to prepare to be efficient when he does work." Having learned in I Samuel David's preparation to be king, we are to learn in these two books what he did as king. This is the reign now for which all the other was a preparation.

The difficulties to be surmounted, if he reigns after God's heart and not Saul's, are many and grave:

1. He must secure the unity of the nation. In Judges we see twelve tribes, each one going off at a tangent, as that expression so often repeated in the book says, "In those days there was no king in Israel, and each man did what seemed to him to be right." Sometimes Judah is before us, sometimes Naphtali, sometimes Gad, sometimes Manasseh; it is not a nation, but twelve loosely-jointed tribes. The first thing that David has to do is to secure the unity of the nation. It takes him seven and a half years to do it after he is crowned at Hebron. So that is his first achievement, and that will be my next discussion—the seven and a half years that David reigned at Hebron while the house of Saul held the greater part of the territory.

2. The second difficulty was to provide a central place of worship that would not cause jealousies, and such services at that place of worship as would help perpetuate the unity of the nation. Never before had these been fully attained.

I stop here long enough to make a remark that I may repeat later, that when the thirteen original colonies seceded from England and under a loose sort of compact fought the Revolutionary War, and at the close of the war began to take steps for a more permanent union, one of the greatest problems was, "Where are we to put the capital?" and it is a very interesting part of American history to read

the debates on the location of the capital. If the discussion had been deferred till our time the capital would never have been put at Washington, but it was the right place then. It had been partly in New York, partly in Philadelphia, and sometimes "on wheels," and the biggest kind of a compromise was effected by its permanent location, and in order that no State might claim the capital, Virginia and Maryland were to donate for it a certain district to be national property.

Here we see David do something much like that. He would not have his capital at Hebron, as that would look too much like a Judah-capital, nor Gibeah, where Saul had reigned. He takes an entirely new place, to be owned by all the nation—half in Judah and half in Benjamin.

3. The third thing that he has to do is to destroy, or at least break the backbone of those enemies who have been fighting the children of Israel ever since their settlement in the country. You will see David do this. You will see him crush under his feet, and under the iron hand of his power, every national enemy. There will be no more a battle of Gilboa. There will be no more "grindstone" periods, and for the first time you will see the boundaries filled out just as God stated them originally in His promises. They will reach from the River of Egypt to the Euphrates.

4. He must organize what is called a "civil service," that is, an administrative body. He counts it important to provide a financial system adequate to supply national needs and representation at foreign courts—all things of that kind. Then, he must organize an army, so as not to depend upon indiscriminate levies such as we have seen Deborah, Barak, Gideon, Jephtha and Saul doing, blowing a trumpet and calling a big militia crowd out that will fight if you let them fight quick, but they have to go home next week. If they win a fight they must go home to divide the spoils—must take something to the wife and children.



5. He had to organize the kingdom—organize its priests and Levites with a view to such services at the central place of worship as would make that central place of unity the joy of the whole earth; make it the mightiest power in holding the nation together. He is for the first time to organize the choir, so famous in the temple service.

6. The sixth point, and no less important than the others, he must prepare for a transfer of the succession without trouble. There is where trouble comes to nations, when one ruler goes out and another comes in; when one king dies, who shall be his successor. We will see how wisely David safeguarded the nation at all points so far as he could do it, and he certainly did provide for the succession of his son Solomon.

As we have only one other question to consider I will restate these six points: (1) To secure the unity of the nation. (2) Central place of worship. (3) Services of a character to maintain the unity. (4) Destruction of opposing enemies. (5) Organization. (6) Provision for succession. You will have learned great things from these two books when you get these fixed in your mind.

David was a type of Christ:

1. He is called the "Lord's anointed," and "Anointed" is what the word "Christ" means. "Christ" is English; *Christos* is Greek; "Messiah" is Hebrew; they all mean the same thing.

2. He was a type of Christ in uniting in one person the offices of prophet, priest and king.

3. He was a type of Christ in the trials and sufferings of the preparation for his reign. Look at that suffering life; look at the awful persecutions, and then read in the New Testament about the Savior's sufferings before He got to the point where it could be said of Him: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors;

and let the King of Glory come in." What an awful preparation Christ had to pass through!

4. He was a type of Christ in the expressions in the Psalms of the agony of the Messianic sufferings. When we come to the Psalter we will understand better the typical character of David.

5. He was a type of Christ in that he was God's representative to man, and man's representative to God.

6. And here is a strange one—He was a type of Christ in being the head or ruler of the heathen, as well as the beloved monarch of his own people. That thought is very clearly brought out in our history.

7. He marked the place of Christ's birth by being born there himself.

### QUESTIONS

1. What the Biblical sources of material for a history of the reign of David?
2. Apart from these two books, what Biblical material have we for an interpretation of this history?
3. Restate the relations between the two Biblical histories of David's reign.
4. What of the chronology in II Samuel and I Chronicles?
5. What the probable time-order of the events in these books?
6. How does this Old Testament history, as well as all other Old Testament history, differ from secular history?
7. How then must this history be studied?
8. What the elements of this preparation?
9. How much do II Samuel and I Chronicles contribute toward this preparation?
10. How much do these two books contribute to the Messianic idea?
11. So far in the history of David, what have we learned?
12. What are we to learn in these two books?
13. What the difficulties to be surmounted, if he reigns after God's heart and not Saul's?
14. How was David a type of Christ?

## XVI

### DAVID, KING OF JUDAH AT HEBRON, AND THE WAR WITH THE HOUSE OF SAUL

*Scriptures:* References in Harmony, pp. 103-108

**T**HE state of the nation just after the battle of Gilboa was this:

1. The Philistines held all central Palestine, the remnants of Saul's family and army, together with the people of that section, having fled across the Jordan, leaving all their possessions to the enemy.

2. David had gained a sweeping victory in the South country over the Amalekites and their allies, and had distributed the spoils among the near-by cities of Judah, but as Ziklag was destroyed he had no home.

In these conditions David displayed both piety and wisdom. He submitted the whole matter of his duty to Jehovah's direction, and accordingly went with all his family and forces and possessions and settled at Hebron, there to await further indications of the divine will as they might be expressed to him by communication through prophet, priest or providential leadings. He knew on many assurances that he was anointed to be king over all Israel, but would not complicate a distressful situation by hasty assertion of his claim. He well knew that the charter of the kingdom required the people's voluntary ratification of the divine choice, and took no steps to coerce their acquiescence.

Hebron was specially valuable as his home and headquarters pending the ratification by the people. It was the sacred city of Judah, hallowed by many historic memories

from Abraham's day to his own time. These memories clustered around him as a shelter and comfort, and as a reminder of all the precious promises given to the fathers. Hebron was their home when living and burial place when dead. The ægis of a long line of illustrious sires was over him there as the heir of all legacies. It was also the most notable of the six cities of refuge. Whoever assaulted him, resting there by divine direction, must fight all the sacred memories of the past and all the glorious promises of the future. Jehovah, prophet, priest and Levite were with him there. Moreover, this old city—one of the oldest in the world—was defensible against attack, and strategical for either observation or aggression.

The first expression of popular approval was when all Judah gathered there and made him king of the royal tribe concerning which a dying ancestor had prophesied: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, till Shiloh come; and unto Him shall be the obedience of the nations." This act alone by this one tribe was worth more to David than recognition by all the other tribes.

The sending of an embassy by David to the men of Jabesh-gilead, carrying his benediction for their loyalty to Saul in rescuing and burying with due honor his body and the bodies of his sons gibbeted in public shame on the walls of Bethshan, together with his promise to requite what they had done, bears every stamp of tender sincerity and not one mark of a mere politician. What he did is in entire accord with all his past and future acts toward the house of Saul. He himself, under the greatest provocation, had never struck back at Saul, twice sparing his life, never conspiring against him, not only in every way honoring him as God's anointed, but instantly inflicting the death penalty on every man who sought to gain his favor by indignity offered to Saul or any of his family.

Considering this past and future conduct toward the house of Saul, the evident tenderness of his elegy over Saul and Jonathan, we may not construe as the adroit stroke of a politician the last clause of his message, to wit: "Now, therefore, let your hands be strong, and be ye valiant; for Saul your lord is dead, and also the house of Judah have anointed me king over them." This is an exceedingly modest intimation that the way is now open for them without any disloyalty to the fallen house, to turn their allegiance to God's choice of Saul's successor. But this generous proposition of David was defeated, and a long and bloody civil war was brought on by the ambition of one man, Abner, the uncle of Saul, who, for mere selfish ends set up Ish-bosheth, a son of Saul, as king. Here we need to explain the parenthetical clause of II Sam. 2:10 in connection with verse 1 of chapter 3. This parenthetical clause reads: "Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, was forty years old when he began to reign over Israel, and he reigned two years." The other verse reads: "Now there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David."

Attention has been called more than once to the uncertainty in Old Testament text, in numbers, because its numerals are expressed in letters, and that mistakes of transcription easily occur. Now if the two years in this clause expresses the true text, and not seven years and a half, then the meaning must be this—that Abner set up Ish-bosheth just as soon as possible after the battle of Gilboa, but it took him more than five years to bring all of the tribes except Judah into acceptance of Ish-bosheth as king, and two years describes the last two of the seven and a half. If that be the meaning, then the history does not give the details of Abner's five and a half years' struggle to bring about Ish-bosheth's rule over all Israel but Judah, and these details must have shown, if we had any, that he had to drive out the Philistines that held the territory, and hence



it was only in the latter part of Ish-bosheth's reign, counting from the time he was set up, to the approach to the west side of the Jordan which is described in this chapter.

It is evident from all the context that Abner knew that David was God's choice, for he says so later on and makes a point on it. It is also evident that he regards Ish-bosheth as a mere figurehead to prepare the way for his own ultimate assumption of the sovereignty. His taking to himself of Saul's harem, against which Ish-bosheth protested, did mean just what Ish-bosheth said it meant—that it was equal to claiming the kingdom for himself. As soon, therefore, as he finds out that his motive is thoroughly understood, then as an evidence that good motives have not actuated him, he announces to Ish-bosheth that he is going to carry all the people back to David, God's choice.

We recall from English history that the Duke of Warwick is called "The King Maker;" that he made Edward IV king, and when Edward IV insulted him then he took sides with Henry VI and made him king. Just exactly in this way Abner acts in this history. His motives, therefore, are merely the motives of a man who knows that his course is opposed to God and to the best interests of the people, but is determined to further his own selfish ambitions.

This war of seven and a half years was thus characterized: "And David waxed stronger and stronger, but the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker." But when, after five and a half years of confirming the authority of Ish-bosheth, Abner felt himself strong enough, he left the east side of the Jordan and carried his army over near Gibeah, Saul's old home, with the evident purpose of making Ish-bosheth king over the whole nation. David did not make the aggression, but he resisted aggression, so he sends out his army under Joab and they stand opposed to each other near a pool of water at Gibeah. A hostile army being

brought that near Hebron, David has to meet it. The war then was evidently forced by the house of Saul.

The events, in order, leading up to David's being made king over all Israel are as follows: The first event is Joab's great victory over Abner at Gibeah. Abner proposed that a dozen champions from each side fight a duel and let that fight settle the whole question. When these twenty-four men met they met with such fury that at the first stroke every man on either side killed his opponent and was killed by his opponent, so that the duel was not decisive, but it brought on the fight. Joab then gains an easy victory. One of Joab's brothers, Asahel, swift of foot, follows Abner, pursues him, and your history tells you that Abner killed Asahel by thrusting him through with the butt end of his spear, striking backward. I suppose the end of the spear was sharp, as he didn't hit him with the point, but with the sharpened butt of it. That stopped the battle, but no injury to Joab ever stopped him until he wreaked his vengeance. So here it ended by his killing Abner for the death of Asahel, as we will see a little later.

The next event, in order, is the quarrel between Abner and Ish-bosheth on account of Ish-bosheth's protest against the infamous deed of Abner, and the next is Abner's deserting to David, persuading the tribes that Ish-bosheth is just a figurehead and his cause getting weaker all the time, and David is getting stronger, and the right thing to do was for all to come in and recognize the king that God had chosen. Abner came to David making that proposition. David told him that the first thing to be done was that he should restore Michal, his wife, who had been given to another man. I do not know that any particular love prompted David. I don't see why, with the number of wives he already had, he had any love to pour out on her, but if he had any political stroke in view it was that if the daughter of Saul was brought back to him as his wife, then it would make it

easier for the followers of Saul to come to this united family, representing both sides, as it was proposed by Catherine de Medici to unite the Huguenots and the Romanists by marriage between Henry of Navarre on the Huguenot side to Margaret, the sister of King Charles of France, on the other side.

The next event is the murder of Abner by Joab—a cold-blooded murder. The plan of it was agreed on between himself and his brother Abishai that they would send for Abner, who had left after his interview with David, and bring him back in David's name, and then Joab proposed to step aside and inquire about his health, and while he is inquiring about his health he stabbed him under the fifth rib. David laments the death of Abner, but does not punish Joab. On the contrary, he says, "These sons of Zeruiah are too hard for me." His sister, Zeruiah, had three sons—Joab, Abishai and Asahel. He will have a good deal more trouble with that family yet. They will be harder than they were in this case.

The next step was, seeing that Ish-bosheth now has no standing; Abner dead, no general, the people all agreeing to go back to David, two ruffians who wanted to make capital with David assassinated Ish-bosheth and carried the news of their assassination to David, expecting to be rewarded. He rewarded them very promptly—by executing them. These are the events in order that led up to the union of the nation under David.

The children born to David in Hebron are mentioned in the record: Ammon, or Amnon, the son of Abinoam. We will find out about him later. It would have been better if he had never been born. The next one is Chileab, or Daniel, as he is called in Chronicles, a son of Abigail. We do not know whether he turned out well or ill, as he drops out of the history. The next one is Absalom, the son of Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, the king of Geshur. We

will certainly hear of him later. It would have been better if he had never been born. The others make no mark in the history at all. O this polygamy! This polygamy! The jealousies of polygamy! It is an awful thing.

Now let us look at the character of Abner, Ish-bosheth and Joab. Abner was a man of considerable talent and influence, but unscrupulously ambitious. Ish-bosheth had just about as much backbone as a jelly-fish. Joab was a great general—a very stern, selfish warrior. Himself as unscrupulous as Abner, though not as disloyal. But we are a long way from being done with Joab. A great text for a sermon in this section is: "These sons of Zeruiah are too hard for me;" that is, a man should beware, in accomplishing his purposes, of the character of the instruments that he associates with him. If he calls in Turks, Tartars, and Huns to be his allies, then after a while he will have to settle with his allies, and he may find that his allies are too strong for him. A proverb advises us to keep no company with a violent man. We are always in danger if a violent, unscrupulous man is our associate. Like poor dog Tray, we may get a beating for being in their company.

We have Joab's reply to Abner in II Sam. 2:27: "Then Abner called to Joab and said, Shall the sword devour forever? Knowest thou not that it will be bitterness in the latter end? How long shall it be then, ere thou bid the people return from following their brethren?" Joab was pursuing them sorely. "And Joab said, As God liveth, if thou hadst not spoken, surely then in the morning the people had gone away, nor followed every one his brother." What is the sense of that last verse? Abner speaks and wants to know why they are pursuing him, and Joab says, "If thou hadst not spoken then every man would not be pursuing his brother." I will leave that to the reader and the commentators as to just what Joab meant.

## QUESTIONS

1. What the state of the nation just after the battle of Gilboa?
2. In these conditions how did David display both piety and wisdom?
3. What the value of Hebron as his home and headquarters pending the ratification by the people?
4. What was the first expression of popular approval?
5. Was David's embassy to the men of Jabesh-gilead the sincere act of a statesman, or an adroit stroke of a politician?
6. What defeated this generous proposition of David and brought on a long and bloody civil war?
7. Explain the parenthetical clause of II Sam. 2: 10 in connection with verse 1 of chapter 3.
8. Judging from his conduct throughout, what motives must have inspired Abner?
9. What characterizes this war of seven and one-half years?
10. Show how aggression came from Abner.
11. State, in order, the events leading up to David's being made king over all Israel.
12. What children were born to David in Hebron, and what may we say about them?
13. What the character of Abner, Ish-bosheth and Joab?
14. What great text for a sermon in this section?
15. What the sense of Joab's reply to Abner., II Sam. 2: 27?



## XVII

### DAVID MADE KING OVER ALL ISRAEL AND THE CAPTURE OF JERUSALEM FOR A CAPITAL

*Scriptures:* References in the Harmony, pp. 108, 109

**T**HIS section is short, but intensely important. Please observe the method of the harmonist in arranging the text of the reign of David into periods of War, Rest and Internal Dissensions. This arrangement is admirable for topical discussion, but does not follow a strict chronological order of events. It is a characteristic of the histories themselves to intersperse here and there in the details of the story a comprehensive summary extending far beyond the specific details which precede or follow—for example, II Sam. 5:4-14.

The first notable event of this section is that David is made king over all Israel, at Hebron. For this consummation David himself deserves unstinted praise. There was nothing in his own conduct while Saul lived or after his death to make it difficult for any surviving partisan of Saul's house to come over to David. Under persecution he had been loyal; in opportunities for vengeance he had been merciful; in the hour of triumph his spirit was not arrogant but conciliatory; in the long postponement of the divine purpose he was not impatient, never seeking, as some of his ancestors had done, to hasten by his own meddling the ripening of Jehovah's prophecies and promises. And when some of his too zealous or more vengeful partisans took short cuts toward the destined end on lines of their own passions, he made it evident by signal rebuke that he was

not personally responsible for their wrong-doing. He never rewarded a traitor for assassinating a member of the house of Saul except with instant execution and with expressions of the most pronounced abhorrence of their crimes. In impassioned and evidently sincere elegy he bore high tribute to the merits of the dead, mingled with a matchless charity that was silent as to their demerits, while sending benedictions to those who befriended them. So the remnants of Saul's following and family had no grievances against David to forget or to forgive.

When we place over against this conduct of David the conduct of Philip II of Spain, the contrast is awful. Philip openly and habitually offered large rewards to assassins who by any means would murder his enemies, and sang, "*Te Deum Laudamus*" when they succeeded. His nature was as cold as a frog, poisonous as a snake, treacherous as a coyote, cruel as a panther. In wholesale murder, arson and confiscation he was the prince of criminals, eclipsing the infamy of both Nero and Herod, and in stark unctuous hypocrisy none in the annals of time might dare to claim equality with him, much less pre-eminence over him. He was the Monster of the centuries. It certainly must have caused Satan himself to put on a sardonic grin when hearing Philip called "His most Christian majesty." Spain, at Philip's accession, was the dominant world-power; he left it with none so poor to do it reverence. Judea, at David's accession, was at the bottom place among the nations; he left it on top, the glory of the world. The contrast spells just this: David was a saint, Philip was a devil.

It is to be regretted that so little reason prompted those tribes, now eager for union, to promote the defection which this union healed. Under the dominant influence of a selfish leader they set up Ish-bosheth against the known will of Jehovah. They warred in open aggression against the choice of Jehovah. They made no decisive effort toward pacifi-

cation while they had a leg to stand on, and when they did come back into the union their expressed reasons for return, while evidently now sincere, were all equally strong against their making the original breach. Look at these reasons and see. They assign three reasons for their return: (1) "Behold we are thy bone and thy flesh." (2) "In times past, when Saul was king over us; it was thou that leddest out and broughtest in Israel." (3) "Jehovah said to thee, Thou shalt be shepherd of my people, and thou shalt be prince over Israel." In view of these cogent reasons, one may well inquire, Why, then, a long and bloody war of division?

The steps of the national reunion were these:

1. An armed host of all the tribes came simultaneously to David at Hebron to make him king.

2. Their elders, as representatives, enter into solemn covenant with him before Jehovah.

3. They anoint him king over all Israel.

4. A three-days' festival of great joy celebrates the event. All these steps were profoundly significant, and are worthy of comment. Concerning the first step—the gathering of the armed host to Hebron—some remarks are pertinent:

1. The total number of armed men who came together simultaneously from all of the tribes was enormous. Apart from the captains, and with the contingent of Issachar not stated, the total is 339,000, but assuming Issachar's contingent to be somewhat between Zebulun's and Napthali's, say 40,000, and adding the captains which are enumerated, the total would be 380,221.

2. The very large contingent from the house of Aaron of both branches shows how thoroughly the priesthood which Saul had hated stood by David.

3. The contingents from the least prominent tribes,

Manasseh, Zebulun, Napthali, Asher, Reuben and Gad, were all out of proportion greater than the near-by tribes.

4. The small contingent from Benjamin is explained by the fact that even yet the greater part were attached to the house of Saul, but the reason of Judah's small number is not given. The trans-Jordanic two-and-a-half tribes send a third of the total.

5. The remark concerning the contingent of the western half—Manasseh—is that they came instructed to make David king.

6. The remark concerning the two hundred leaders of Issachar has been the theme of many a sermon: "Men that had understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do." Oh, that such men were multiplied in our day!

7. Concerning Zebulun's 50,000, it is said they were "not of double heart." May such men flourish in this unstable, twisting and turning generation!

8. Indeed, concerning all of them, it is said, "They came with perfect heart to make David king."

It was quite in accord with the patriarchal and representative constitution of the nation that the princes and elders of the tribes should act for them in entering into covenant with David. It must have been an imposing sight, to see nearly half a million armed men in fifteen distinct corps waiting at Hebron, while their statesmen, prophets, priests and generals deliberated on the terms of the covenant.

*The Covenant.*—The covenant itself doubtless was based on the charter of the kingdom as defined by Moses and Samuel, which safeguarded the rights of all parties concerned, towit: Jehovah, the king, the national assembly, the religion, and the people at large. It was an intensely religious act, seeing it was "before Jehovah." Following this covenant came—

*The Anointing.*—David had already been twice anointed, first at Bethlehem privately by Samuel as an expression of Jehovah's choice, and as a symbol of the Spirit-power that rested on him. A second time here at Hebron his anointing was expressive of Judah's choice, but now this third more public and imposing anointing on such a grand occasion, following such a covenant, takes on a wider and most charming significance so appropriately expressed by David himself in Psalm 133 that it seems to have been occasioned by this event:

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is  
For brethren to dwell together in unity!  
It is like the precious oil upon the head,  
That ran down upon the beard,  
Even Aaron's beard;  
That came down upon the skirt of his garments;  
Like the dew of Hermon,  
That cometh down upon the mountains of Zion:  
For there Jehovah commanded the blessing,  
Even life for evermore."

It is certain that never before nor since was there such a thorough and joyous unity of the nation, and such brotherly love among the Jews, nor ever will be until erring and dispersed Israel, long exiled from Jehovah's favor, shall be gathered out of all nations and turn in one momentous day with such penitence as the world has never known to David's greater Son, according to the prophecies of Zechariah, Ezekiel, Isaiah and Paul. Then, indeed, in one sense, will the "Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" be "anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows" because He sees "The travail of His soul" concerning Israel and is satisfied. We might well look to a greater fulfilment when the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ, at which time more appropriately than ever before in the history may a redeemed and united world unite in singing the greatest human coronation hymn,



"Bring forth the royal diadem  
And crown Him Lord of All!"

*The Festival.*—Perhaps the most remarkable feature of the whole occasion is the provision made for entertaining a half million people for three days. Our text says, "And they were there with David three days, eating and drinking: for their brethren had made preparation for them. Moreover, they that were nigh unto them, even as far as Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali, brought bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen, victual of meal, cakes of figs, and clusters of raisins, and wine, and oil, and oxen, and sheep in abundance: for there was joy in Israel." This great festival of joy not only reminds us of the sacrificial feast following the covenant at Sinai (Ex. 24:1-11), but prefigures the one announced in later days by Isaiah thus: "And in this mountain will Jehovah of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering that covereth all peoples, and the veil that is spread over all nations. He hath swallowed up death forever; and the Lord Jehovah will wipe away tears from off all faces; and the reproach of His people will He take away from off all the earth," Isa. 25:6-8, or that greater festival adverted to by our Lord when He said concerning the salvation of the multitudinous thousands of the Gentiles, "Many shall come from the East and the West, and the North and the South, and shall recline at the table with Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven."

The auspices for the nation were all propitious. They have a king over them, not like other nations, but a king after God's own heart. The rights, powers and privileges of all parties interested were all clearly defined and solemnized by imposing ceremonies of religion. Here was God's choice of the man, the ratification by the national assembly,

bonds of charter and covenant, the presence and concurrence of prophet and priests, to which may be added, in the words of our text, "And all the rest also of Israel were all of one heart to make David king." The plan of the kingdom, and its start are perfect. If failure shall come in later days, as come it will, it will be for no fault in the plan.

*The Taking of Jerusalem.*—David's first act of royalty tends to promote and perpetuate the union, namely, the securing of a central capital, strong for defence or aggression, and not likely to promote tribal jealousy. It would not do to make Hebron, distinctly a city of Judah, the national capital, nor yet Gibeah of Benjamin, where Saul had reigned. It must be a new place which commanded the Arabah, the Negeb, the Mediterranean coast, and all the highways from North to South and East to West. To meet these conditions there was but one place, the city whose citadel was held by the Jebusites; part of it lay in Judah's allotted territory and part in Benjamin's, but neither had driven the Jebusites from the citadel which overawed the city.

*Memories of the Place.*—It had been the city of Melchizedek, king of peace and righteousness, priest of the Most High God, to whom Abraham had paid tithes, and type of our Lord, David's greater son. There, also, on Mount Moriah, in the greatest typical act of the ages, Abraham came to offer up his well-beloved son, Isaac, the child of promise, and there, in a type of our Lord's resurrection, was Isaac saved. The authority of Moses still cried, "Drive out these Jebusites," so David called the united nation to arms.

The selection of a capital for a nation made up of varied and jealous constituencies calls for the highest wisdom and the broadest spirit of compromise. Every student of our national history will recall what a perplexing thing it was for our fathers to agree on the site of a national capital.

Philadelphia, the continental capital, would not do, nor would Annapolis, where Washington returned his sword at the close of the war, nor New York, with its Wall Street, where Washington was inaugurated. A district, ceded by Virginia and Maryland as an inalienable national possession, was the compromise, just as here Jerusalem, lying partly in Judah and partly in Benjamin, becomes the capital, and yet to be conquered by the united force of the nation, giving all a special interest in it. "For similar reasons," says a fine commentator, "promotive of national union, we have seen Victor Emmanuel made king of a united Italy, change his capital, first from Turin in Lombardy to Florence in Tuscany, and then to Rome, the ancient imperial city." So now, David, the wisest and most prudent of monarchs, avails himself of the enthusiasm of a united nation and the presence of a great army to lead them to storm the citadel of the Jebusites.

Two incidents of that great victory are worthy of note: (1) the scornful greeting of the Jebusites, confident in the impregnability of their fortress: "Even with the blind and the lame to hold the walls he cannot come in hither." (2) David's offer to reward the one who would scale the wall, the position of commander-in-chief of his army, won by his nephew Joab. Following the conquest comes the

*Rapid Fortification.*—He lengthened, strengthened and connected the walls of the city. Indeed, there was reason for haste, as storms of war were gathering from every point of the horizon.

Two results follow the union of the nation under such a king, and the rapid conquest and fortification of such a capital: (1) David waxed stronger and stronger; (2) neighboring nations, jealous and alarmed, prepare to pour on him a tide of war.

And now, before we dip into the bloody pages of these wars, two remarks are timely: (1) Throughout David's

reign, every act of his administration is promotive of the national unity centered at Jerusalem; (2) Jerusalem from this date forward to the end of time and throughout eternity will be the world's chief city, either in type or antitype. Its vicissitudes in subsequent history are the most remarkable in the annals of time. On account of David's work and preparation it became in Solomon's day the joy of the whole earth. The Psalms proclaim its glory in worship, and after its fall they voice the exile's lament: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, may my right hand forget its cunning and my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth." Babylon captured it; Persia restored it; Greece, through Alexander the Great, honored it; Antiochus Epiphanes defiled it; the Asmoneans took it; the Messiah heard its hosannahs one day and its "Crucify Him" another day; Rome destroyed it; the Saracens captured it; the Crusader re-captured it; the Turk holds it and Germany covets it. Its desolation has lasted nearly two thousand years and will last until the fulness of the Gentiles comes in. Its greatest glory is that its temple symbolized the churches of the living God, and the city itself symbolized the Heavenly Jerusalem, which is the mother of all the saints. [The author's reference to Germany's desire to acquire Jerusalem was written long before the Great War which has witnessed the Germanic-Turkish alliance. The words seem prophetic.—EDITOR.]

### QUESTIONS

1. What the method of the harmonist in arranging the text of David's reign, extending from page 108 to 163, inclusive?
2. What a characteristic of the histories themselves?
3. What the first notable event of this section?
4. What credit was due David himself in this great consummation?
5. Contrast David's course in this matter with the character and polity of Philip II of Spain.
6. What reasons assigned by the tribes for their return to David, and the bearing of their reasons on their defection?
7. What the several steps of this national reunion?

8. What the notable particulars of the armed hosts who assembled?
9. What the representative act of the elders?
10. What of the covenant itself?
11. What of the anointing?
12. What of the three days' festival?
13. What the first kingly act of David to strengthen and perpetuate this national union?
14. What place selected for the capital, its advantages, and memories?
15. What the incidents of its capture?
16. What steps taken to fortify it?
17. What two results naturally followed this union of the nation under such a king in such a capital?
18. What the position of Jerusalem henceforward among the cities of the world?
19. Relate some of its vicissitudes in subsequent history.



## XVIII

### THE WARS OF DAVID

*Scriptures:* References in the Harmony, pp. 110-114, 118-125

OUR last chapter intimated that the union of the nation under such a king as David, in such a capital, would naturally excite the jealousy and alarm of all neighboring heathen nations. This section commences thus: "And when the Philistines heard that they had anointed David king over Israel, all the Philistines went up to seek David."

Your attention has already been called to the necessity of breaking the power of the hostile heathen nations lying all around Judea, if ever the Jewish nation is to fulfil its mission to all other nations. The geographical position of Judea, which is the best in the world for leavening the nations with the ideas of the kingdom of God, if it maintained its national purity and adherence to Jehovah, also made it the most desirable possession for other peoples having far different ideals. As the salvation of the world, including these very hostile nations, depended on the perpetuity and purity of Israel, these nations, through whom came idolatry and national corruption, must be broken, hence the seeming cruelty and partiality of Jehovah's order through Moses to destroy the Canaanites, root and branch, and to avoid the corruptions of the other nations, were meant as mercy and kindness to the world.

The nations against which David successfully warred, so far as our text records them, were the Philistines, the Ammonites, the Syrians of Zobah, the Syrians of Damas-

cus, the Moabites, and the Edomites. He had previously smitten the Amalekites of the Negeb. On these wars in general the following observations are noteworthy:

1. He was never the aggressor.
2. He never lost a battle.
3. His conquest filled out the kingdom to the boundaries originally promised to Abraham.

4. The spoils of all these wars, staggering credulity in their variety and value, were consecrated to Jehovah, making the richest treasury known to history.

5. By alliance without war he secured the friendship of Hiram, king of Tyre, most valuable to him and to his son Solomon. As Phœnicia, through the world-famous fleets of Tyre and Sidon, commanded the Mediterranean with all its marine commerce, and as David ruled the land through whose thoroughfares must pass the caravans carrying this traffic to Africa, Arabia, India, Syria and Mesopotamia, it was of infinite value to both to be in friendly alliance. To these merchant-princes it was of incalculable advantage that all the land transportation of their traffic should lie within the boundaries of one strong and friendly nation rather than to have to run the gauntlet between a hundred irresponsible and predatory tribes, while to David, apart from the value of this peaceful commerce, the whole western border of Judea along the Mediterranean coast was safe from invasion by sea so long as friendship was maintained with Hiram, king of the sea.

6. By the voluntary submission of Hamath after his conquest of Damascus, he controlled the famous historic "Entrance into Hamath," the one narrow pathway of traffic with the nations around the Caspian Sea, thus enabling David to reach those innumerable northern hordes so graphically described in later days by Ezekiel, the exile-prophet.

7. By the conquest of Damascus he controlled the only caravan-route to the Euphrates and Mesopotamia, since the

desert lying east of the trans-Jordanic tribes was practically impassable for trade and army movement from a lack of water. We have seen Abraham, migrating from Ur of the Chaldees, low down on the Euphrates, compelled to ascend that river for hundreds of miles in order to find an accessible way to the Holy Land through Damascus. In his day, also Chedorlaomer's invasion had to follow the same way, as we will see later invasions do in Nebuchadnezzar's time, which at last conquered David's Jerusalem.

8. By the conquest of Ammon, Moab and Edom, all the Arabah passed into his hands, checkmating invasion by Arabian hordes, as well as barring one line of invasion from Egypt. By the conquest of the Philistines and Amalekites the other two ways of Egyptian invasion were barred. You should take a map, such as you will find in Hurlbut's Atlas, and show how David's wars and peaceful alliances safeguarded every border, north, east, south and west.

Besides these general observations, we may note a special feature characterizing these, and indeed all other wars, prior to the leveling invention of gunpowder and other high explosives, namely, much was accomplished by individual champions of great physical prowess and renown. David himself was as famous in this respect as Richard, the Lion-hearted, until in a desperate encounter, related in this section, his life was so endangered that a public demand justly required him to leave individual fighting to less necessary men and confine himself to the true duty of a general—the direction of the movements of the army.

Your text recites the special exploits of Jashobeam, Eleazer, Shammah, Abishai, Benaiah, or Benajah, after whom my father, myself, and my oldest son were named. With them may be classed the ten Gadites whose faces were like the faces of lions and who were as swift as the mountain deer, the least equal to a hundred and the greatest equal to a thousand. These crossed the Jordan at its mighty

flood and smote the Philistines in all its valley, east and west.

Quite to the front also, as giant-killers, were Sibbecai, Elhanan and Jonathan's nephew. Of others, all mighty heroes, we have only a catalogue of names as famous in their day as Hercules, Theseus, and Achilles, Ajax, Ulysses, Horatius, and King Arthur's Knights of the Round Table, but, as philosophizes Sir Walter Scott in "Ivanhoe" concerning the doughty champions at the tourney of Ashby de la Zouch: "To borrow lines from a contemporary poet,

'The knights are dust,  
And their good swords rust,  
Their souls are with the saints, we trust,'

while their escutcheons have long mouldered from the walls of their castles; their castles themselves are but green mounds and shattered ruins; the place that once knew them knows them no more. Nay, many a race since theirs has died out and been forgotten in the very land which they occupied with all the authority of feudal proprietors and lords. What then would it avail to the reader to know their names, or the evanescent symbols of their martial rank?"

One exploit of three of these champions deserves to live forever in literature. It thrills the heart by the naturalness of its appeal to the memory of every man concerning the precious things of his childhood's home. David was in his stronghold, the Cave of Adullam, weary and thirsty. Bethlehem and his childhood rise before him: "O that one would give me water to drink of the Well of Bethlehem that is by the gate!" His exclamation thrills like Woodworth's famous poem,

"How dear to my heart are the scenes of my childhood,  
As fond recollection presents them to view!  
The orchard, the meadow, the deep-tangled wildwood,  
And ev'ry loved spot which my infancy knew."

David's longing for water from that particular well, and Woodworth's "Old Oaken Bucket" harmonize with my own experience whenever I am delirious with fever. I always see a certain spring on my father's plantation issuing from the moss-covered, fern-bordered rocks, and filling a sunken barrel. Hard by, hanging on a bush, is the gourd which, when dipped into the cold, clear spring, is more precious to thirsty lips than the silver tankards or gold drinking cups of kings; only in my fever-thirst I never am able to get that gourd to my lips.

Three of David's mighty men heard the expression of his longing for that water out of the Well of Bethlehem, and slipping quietly away, not caring that a Philistine garrison held Bethlehem, the three men alone break through the defended gate and under fire draw water from the well and bring a vessel of it over a long, hot way to thirsty David. It touched his heart when he saw their wounds. He could not drink water purchased with their blood, but poured it out as a libation to such great and devoted friendship.

Some other incidents of the Philistine war are worthy of comment:

1. So great was the defeat of the Philistines in their first battle, where David, under divine direction, attacked the center of their army, the scene is named "Baal-Perazim," *i.e.*, "The place of breaking forth." Splitting their column wide open at its heart, he dispersed them in every direction. They even left their gods behind them to be burned by David's men. We need not be startled at the burning of such gods, for history tells of one nation that ate their god, made out of dough, in times of famine. This breaking of a battle-center was a favorite method with Napoleon later, and vainly attempted by Lee at Gettysburg.

2. In the second great battle, again following divine direction, he avoided the center where they expected his attack as before and were there prepared for him this time,



and "fetched" a compass to their rear, sheltered from their view by a thick growth of balsam trees, and on hearing "a sound of a going" in these trees, struck them unawares and overthrew them completely.

So Stonewall Jackson, his movements sheltered from observation by the trees of the wilderness, marched and struck in his last and greatest victory at Chancellorsville. And so did that master of war, Frederick the Great, screened by intervening hills, turn the Austrian columns and win his greatest victory at Leuthen. Major Penn, the great Texas lay-evangelist, preached his greatest sermon from "This fetching a compass," and "When thou hearest the sound of a going in the mulberry trees, bestir thyself." His application was: (a) Let great preachers attack the center, as David did at Baal-Perazim. (b) But as I am only a layman I must fetch a compass and strike them in the rear where they are not expecting attack. (c) As the signal of assault was the sound of a going in the mulberry trees, which we interpret to mean the power of the Holy Spirit going before, we must tarry for that power, for without it we are bound to fail. (d) But that power being evident, let every member of the church bestir himself." On this last point his zealous exhortation puts every man, woman and child to working.

3. The third incident of this war was its culmination. He pressed his victory until "he took the bridle of the mother city out of the hand of the Philistines;" that is, he captured Gath and the four other cities, or daughters, that had gone from it. To take the bridle of a horse from the hand of a rider is to make that horse serve the new master, so Gath and her daughters paid tribute to David and served him—quite a new experience for the Philistines.

4. The result of these great achievements is thus expressed: "And the fame of David went out into all lands; and the Lord brought the fear of him on all nations."

The occasion of his next war, the one with Ammon, was remarkable. Nahash, the king of Ammon, held very friendly relations with David. The fact is that he may have been the father of Amasa, a son of David's sister, Abigail. Anyway, the relations between them had been very pleasant, so when Nahash died, David, out of the kindness of his heart, always remembering courtesies shown him, sent a friendly embassy to Hanun, the son of Nahash, but the princes of Ammon said to the young king, "Do you suppose that love for your father prompted David to send these men? He sent them to spy out the land so that he can make war successfully against us." This evil suggestion led the young king to do a very foolish thing, and one that violated all international policy. He arrested these ambassadors and subjected them to the greatest indignity. Their venerable beards were cut off. I don't know whether that means cut off half-way or just shaved off one side of the face. Then he cut off their long robes of dignity so they would be bob-tailed jackets striking about the hips, and sent them home. No mortification could exceed theirs. Somebody told David about it and he sent this word to them: "Tarry at Jericho until your beards grow out."

A deacon of the First Church at Waco, when I was pastor, whenever a young member of the church would propose some innovation on the customs of the church, would draw up his tall figure—he was quite tall—and would reach out his long arm and point at the young man and say, "My young brother, you had better tarry at Jericho until your beard grows out." It was very crushing on the young brother, and I used to exhort the deacon about his curt way of cutting off members who, whether young or old, had a right equal to his own to speak in conference.

Having practiced that unpardonable indignity upon the friendly ambassadors, the Ammonites know they must fight, since they have made themselves odious to David, so they

raise an enormous sum of money, a thousand talents of silver, and hire 33,000 men from the Syrians—the different branches of the Syrians. Some of them were horsemen from across the Euphrates, some from Tob, some from Maacah, and the rest of them from Zobah. David sends Joab at the head of his mighty army of veterans to fight them. The Ammonites remain in their fortified city of Rabbah, and as Joab's army approaches, 33,000 Syrians come up behind them, and Joab sees that there is a battle to be fought in the front and in the rear, so he divides his army and takes his picked men to attack the Syrians, and commands Abishai, his brother, to go after the Ammonites as they pour out of their city to attack in front. Joab says to his brother, "If the Syrians are too strong for me, you help me, and if the Ammonites are too strong for you, then I will come and help you," and so they fight both ways and whip in both directions with tremendous success. Joab destroys the Syrians, and Abishai drives the Ammonites back under the walls of their city.

That victory leads to another war. When the Syrians heard of the overthrow of the contingent sent to succor Ammon, they sent across the Euphrates again for reinforcements and mobilized a large home army to fight David. David met them in battle and blotted them off the map, and having disposed of the Syrians, at the return of the season for making war, he sent Joab with a mighty army to besiege the city of Rabbah, the capital of the Ammonites. Joab besieges them and when he sees them about to surrender he sends for David to come and accept the surrender and David puts the crown of the king of Ammon on his own head. Then having destroyed the Ammonites, he marches against their southern ally, Moab, and conquers them. Following up this victory he leads his army against Edom, and conquers all that country. This war lasts six months. He gains a great victory over the Edomites and through

'Abishai, his leader, eighteen thousand of the Edomites were slain. The heir of the king escapes with great difficulty to Egypt, and is sheltered there. Joab remained six months to bury the dead and gather up the spoils. So ends this period of conquest.

The text tells you, in conclusion, who were the administration officers during this period. You will find it on page 122 of the Harmony. Joab was over the host, Jehoshaphat was recorder, Zadok and Ahimelech were priests, Seraiah was scribe, Benaiah, or Benajah, was over the Cherethites and Pelethites, and David's sons were chiefs about the king.

That great round of successes is followed by the magnificent song of thanksgiving, which needs to be specially analyzed and which is transferred to the Psalter as Psalm 18.

That you may have a connected account of these wars, the consideration of three periods is deferred to the next chapter:

1. The great sin of David, with its far-reaching consequences, II Sam. 11:2—12:24.
2. His treatment of the Ammonites after the fall of Rabbah, II Sam. 12:31 and I Chron. 20:3.
3. His treatment of the Moabites, II Sam. 8:2.

## QUESTIONS

1. What the necessity of breaking the power of the hostile nations within and around Judea?
2. Show why the geographical position of Judea was favorable to its mission of leavening all nations with the ideas of the kingdom of God, and why Judea was a desirable possession to those nations.
3. What event brought a tide of war on David?
4. According to the record, with what nations did he wage successful war?
5. What four general observations on these wars?
6. What special feature characterized them and all other ancient wars, and what modern inventions have now divested war of this feature?
7. Cite the names of some of David's champions and their exploits.

8. How does Sir Walter Scott, in "Ivanhoe," philosophize on the speedy oblivion coming to great champions?
9. Recite one exploit that deserves to live in literature, and why?
10. Cite the notable characteristics of the battle of Baal-Perazim.
11. Name the more decisive battles which followed, and give illustrations from history of the different methods of attack in those two battles.
12. Give Major Penn's text and sermon outline on some words concerning this battle.
13. Explain: "He took the bridle of the mother city out of the hand of the Philistines."
14. What the result of these great achievements?
15. Recite the occasion of the war with Ammon and its results, and describe the first battle.
16. Give brief statement of wars with Syria, Moab and Edom.
17. With a map before you, show just how by these wars and alliances David safeguarded all his borders.
18. How did he commemorate his victories?
19. How did he celebrate them?
20. Into what other book was his thanksgiving song transferred, and how numbered there?



## XIX

### THREE DARK EVENTS OF DAVID'S CAREER

*Scriptures:* I Sam. 11:1—12:25; 12:31 and I Chron. 20:3;  
II Sam. 8:2; Harmony, pp. 115-117

IN the preceding discussion, three dark events of David's career were omitted, first, because it was thought best to give in unbroken connection a history of his successful wars, carrying his kingdom to its promised boundaries and filling the world with his fame; secondly, because the three events called for special and extended treatment. Truly the wars closed in a blaze of glory, for "The Lord gave victory to David whithersoever he went;" "his kingdom was exalted on high for his people Israel's sake;" "So David gat him a great name," according to the gracious promise of Jehovah, "I will make unto thee a great name, like unto the name of the great ones that are in the earth." Indeed, at the close of these wars his was the most illustrious name on earth and his kingdom the greatest.

It is a bitter thing to give to this luminous glory a background of horrible darkness. Yet fidelity to truth and the ages-long value of the lesson, require us to dip the brush that paints the background in most sombre colors. It is characteristic of portrait painters to use a flattering brush, and it was Cromwell only who said sternly to his portrait-maker, "Paint me as I am; leave not out a scar or blemish." What was exceptional with Cromwell was habitual with inspiration. It describes only one perfect, ideal man. It indulges in no hero-worship. Noah's drunkenness, Jacob's meanness and duplicity, Aaron's golden calf, the ill-advised

words of Moses, the despondency of Elijah, the lying and swearing of Peter, the vengeful spirit of the beloved John, the awful sin of David, "the man after God's own heart," must all appear in the pictures when the Holy Spirit is the limner.

Concerning the best of men standing in the limelight of infinite holiness, we must say with the Psalmist, "I have seen an end of all perfection—for thy commandment is exceeding broad."

The three dark episodes of David's war-career made the theme of this chapter, are: (1) David's great sin in the matter of Bathsheba and Uriah. (2) His treatment of his Ammonite captives. (3) His treatment of his Moabite captives.

The three are presented in one view because it is probable that the second, if not also the third, arose from a conscience blunted by the first. We need not go into the revolting details, since the record is before you, but consider the history only in the light of its practical value, seeing it was recorded "for our admonition."

So far as the first and greatest sin is concerned, it has evoked a voluminous literature. In the "Pulpit Commentary" alone are more than fifty pages of condensed homilies, and in Spurgeon's "Treasury of David" is much more, but perhaps the best homiletical and philosophical treatment you will find in Taylor's "David, King of Israel." His outline of discussion is: (1) The precursors of the sin. (2) Its aggravations. (3) The penitence manifested. (4) The forgiveness received. (5) The consequences flowing from it.

After all, however, the most searching light on his heart experiences are found in his own songs of conviction, penitence and forgiveness in the following order: Psalms 38, 6, 51, 32.

Borrowing somewhat from Taylor's order and treatment we submit this outline:

I. The precursors of David's sin. Sin has a genesis and development. It does not spring into life, like Minerva, full grown. James, the brother of our Lord, states the case thus: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, and He himself tempteth no man; but each man is tempted, when he is drawn away by his own lust, and enticed. Then the lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin, when it is full grown, bringeth forth death, James 1:13-15. What, then, the explanatory antecedents of his sin?

1. Since his crowning at Hebron he had enjoyed a long course of unbroken prosperity. Before that event he had been "emptied from vessel to vessel" and so had not "settled on his lees," but now because he had no changes he becomes over-confident, less watchful and prayerful.

2. Up to the time of this sin he had been a very busy man, leading and sharing in all the privations and hazards of his army, but now, while Joab leads the army against Rabbah, "David tarried at Jerusalem." While his soldiers sleep at night on the tented field, David rises from his daytime bed of luxury to look at eventide on Bathsheba. How grim must have been the rebuke of Uriah's words: "And Uriah said unto David, The Ark and Israel, and Judah, abide in booths; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open field; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? As thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing," II Sam. 11:11. It has been well said, "If Satan tempts busy men, idle and luxurious men tempt Satan."

3. He had prepared himself for a fall at the weakest point in his character by polygamy and concubinage, which, while tolerated under restrictions under Mosaic law, was expressly forbidden to kings: "He shall not multiply wives to himself," which was the Mosaic prohibition of the king-

dom charter, Deut. 17: 17. Sensualism is the sin of Oriental kings.

4. The sense of irresponsibility to moral law creeps with insidious power upon the rich and great and socially distinguished. The millionaires, the upper ten, the great 400—what avails their wealth and power if they be not exempt from the obligations of the seventh commandment? Let the poor be virtuous. The king can do no wrong. To all such people the lesson is hard: "God is no respecter of persons."

5. In times of war the bridle is slipped from human passions.

6. Subservient instruments are always ready to act as panderers to the great, while obsequious, high society palliates and condones their offences.

7. In such conjuncture always comes opportunity as a spark of fire in a powder magazine; millions equally sensual have not sinned because there was no opportunity, no favorable conjuncture of circumstances.

II. *The Sin and Its Aggravations.*—The sin, with all its progeny, was primarily sin against God, but it was adultery with Bathsheba, ingratitude, duplicity and murder to Uriah, complicity in crime with his servants, a sin against himself and family.

1. It was a presumptuous sin against Jehovah, to whose favors it was ingratitude and to whose holiness it was insult, and to whose omniscience, omnipresence and omnipotence it was a brazen dare.

2. It was a violation of his solemn coronation vow at Hebron as expressed in his own Psalm that he would use his kingly office to put down offences, and not for indulgences in them.

3. From his very exalted position as king over God's people it caused the enemies of truth to blaspheme then and ever since. It was a scandal in the etymological sense of the word, a stumbling-block, over which thousands in every

age have fallen. An inspired writer has said, "The wicked eat up the sins of my people." Like buzzards swarming around carrion, they gather and feast and flap their wings in gloating when a Christian sins.

4. It served then and does now as an excuse for worse and smaller men to repeat the offence or to condone other offences.

5. It put his reputation in the hands of the servants employed in the transaction, and paved the way for whatever blackmail the unscrupulous instrument, Joab, might choose to exact, so that indeed hereafter "the sons of Zeruiah will be too hard for him." Whoever calls in Turks, Tartars and Huns for allies must afterwards reckon with the allies.

6. It was a sin against the devoted friendship of his brave champions, Uriah, the Hittite, and his comrade, Bathsheba's father, who for many years of hazard and persecution had been his bulwark.

The meanness of the subterfuge in sending for Uriah that the offence might be hidden from him by making him an unwitting "cuckold," the hypocrisy of sending him choice dishes and the means of drunkenness to the same end, and the refined cruelty of making him the carrier of the letter which contained his death warrant, the deliberate provision for others to die with him when exposed to danger, the order to withdraw from him and them that they might die, and the lying ascription of such death to the chances of war, are unsurpassed in criminal history. A classic legend tells of such a letter carried by Bellerophon, giving rise to the proverb, "Beware of Bellerophonic letters."

III. *The Sin on the Conscience.*—We may not suppose that David was without compunction of conscience for a whole year until reproved by Nathan. The Psalms 38 and 6 indicate the contrary. While his crime was ostensibly a secret, you may be assured that it was an open secret



which greatly damaged the king's reputation, of which he is evidently conscious. Known to Joab and his household servants, it would be whispered from lip to ear, and carried from house to house. Enemies would naturally make the most of it. The side-look, the shoulder-shrug, and many-winged rumors would carry it far and wide. Even in the house of God, where he kept up the form of worship, knowing ones would make signs and comment under the thinnest veil of confidence.

IV. *Jehovah Speaks at Last, or Nathan and David.*—Whatever was David's own conception of his sin, or the judgment of man, our record says, "But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord. And the Lord sent Nathan unto David." Four things here impress the mind:

1. God's judgment of human conduct is more than man's judgment. It is the chief thing. We may hold out against the adverse judgment of men if God approves in the matter of the thing condemned, but there is no withstanding the disapproval of the Holy One.

2. The fidelity of the prophets as mouth-pieces of God. They make no apologies, nor soften words, nor have respect of persons. They speak to a king as to a peasant—to a rich man as to a pauper.

3. The prophet's method of causing David to pass judgment on himself is an inimitable parable that has charmed the world by its simplicity, brevity, pathos and directness.

4. Its application is like a bolt of lightning: "Thou art the man!" In one flash of light the heart of the sin is laid bare, and judgment follows judgment like the dreadful strokes of a trip-hammer, thus: (a) "The sword shall never depart from thy house." (b) "I will raise up evil against thee in thine own house." (c) "What thou hast done secretly against another shall be done against thee openly."

V. *David's Confession.*—It is instant: "I have sinned against the Lord." There is no trickery nor subterfuge,

nor evasion, nor defense. His confession is like the publican's prayer, who stood afar off, not lifting so much as his eyes to heaven, but smiting upon his breast, and saying, "God be merciful to me, *the sinner*." The inspired prophet knew his penitence was genuine, and announces pardon for the world to come, but chastisement in this world, thus explaining those later words of Jesus concerning another and greater sin which is eternal, having never forgiveness neither in this world nor the next world.

VI. *The Time Penalties*.—(1) The death of the child begotten in sin. (2) Following a father's evil example, Amnon assaults his sister, Tamar. (3) Following the father's example, and with much more justice, Absalom murders Amnon. (4) The devil once loosed, Absalom rebels against his father. (5) There being now no restraint, Absalom openly degrades David's concubines, and this too under the advice of Ahithophel, Bathsheba's grandfather, who evidently resents the shame put upon his granddaughter. (6) Joab pitilessly murders Absalom, in open violation of the father's orders, and so exacts immunity as blackmail for his complicity in David's sin. (7) Adonijah's rebellion, encouraged by Joab, and his death. Such the long train of evil consequences of one sin.

VII. *The Sincerity of David's Repentance*.—It is evidenced by his humility, submission and hope on the death of his child. The story is very touching. "The Lord struck the child that Uriah's wife bare to David and it was very sick." The child was much beloved, but must die for the parents' sin. This, David felt keenly: "This baby is dying for my sin." No wonder he fasted and wept and prayed. The submission and hope are manifested after the child is dead. No need now to fast and pray and weep, as when it was yet alive and perchance might be saved. The death is of the body only and for this world only. He lives safe and

happy in that better world: "He cannot return to me, but I may go to him."

In all subsequent ages the doctrines of these words have illumined houses of mourning, "I shall go to him."

*At one stroke it destroys all hope of visitation from the dead, and at another stroke confers all hope of visitation to the dead, with all the joys of recognition and reunion.*

This is by far the lightest of David's penalties. There is no hope of reunion when Amnon and Absalom and Adonijah die. The farewell in their case is eternal. The most impressive, therefore, of all contrasts is the hopeful lamentation over this child, and the hopeless lamentation over Absalom. What a theme for a sermon!

But the sincerity of his penitence is best evidenced in his Psalms. While the 38th and 6th convey most the sense of convicting power, Psalm 51, through the ages, has been regarded as the most vivid expression of contrition and repentance. Two incidents bearing upon his sincerity and genuine penitence cited by Taylor are worth repetition:

1. The testimony of Carlyle, that hater of all shams and hypocrisies, in his "Lecture on the Hero as Prophet," says:

"Faults! the greatest of faults, I should say, is to be conscious of none. Readers of the Bible, above all, one would think, might know better. Who is there called the man of God according to God's own heart? David, the Hebrew king, had fallen into sins enough; blackest crimes; there was no want of sins. And there-upon unbelievers sneer and ask, 'Is this your man according to God's heart?' The sneer, I must say, seems to me but a shallow one. What are faults? what are the outward details of a life, if the inner secret of it—the remorse, temptations, true, often baffled, never-ending struggle of it—be forgotten? 'It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.' Of all acts, is not, for a man, repentance the most divine? The deadliest sin, I say, were that same supercilious consciousness of no sin. That is death. The heart so conscious is divorced from sincerity, humility, and fact, is dead. It is pure, as dead, dry sand is pure. David's life and history, as written for us in those Psalms of his, I consider to be the truest emblem ever given of a man's moral progress and warfare here below. All earnest souls will ever discern in it the faithful struggle of an earnest human soul toward what is good and best. Struggle often baffled sore, baffled down into

entire wreck, yet a struggle never ended; ever with tears, repentance, true, unconquerable purpose begun anew. Poor human nature! Is not a man's walking in truth always that—"a succession of falls?" Man can do no other. In this wild element of a life, he has to struggle upward: now fallen, now abased; and ever with tears, repentance, and bleeding heart, he has to rise again, struggle again, still onward. That his struggle be a faithful, unconquerable one—that is the question of questions."

2. The effect of Psalm 51 on Voltaire when he read it with a view to caricature it. Dr. Leander Van Ess tells it as an undoubted fact that Voltaire once attempted to burlesque this Psalm, and what was the result? While carefully perusing it, that he might familiarize himself with the train of sentiment which he designed to caricature, he became so oppressed and overawed by its solemn devotional tone, that he threw down his pen and fell back half senseless on his couch, in an agony of remorse.

But if Psalm 51 is the highest expression of penitence, the 32nd is the model expression of the joy of forgiveness:

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven,  
Whose sin is covered.

Blessed is the man unto whom Jehovah imputeth not iniquity."

See the use Paul makes of this Psalm in his great argument on justification by faith.

By application of this experience of David we learn other serious lessons.

1. The pen that writes the letter of Uriah must also write the 51st Psalm.

2. It is easy to fall, but difficult to rise again—a thought most vigorously expressed by Virgil and less vigorously rendered by Dryden:

"The gates of Hell are open night and day;  
Smooth the descent, and easy is the way;  
But to return and view the cheerful skies,  
In this the task and mighty labor lies."

3. "One sin another doth provoke;  
Murder's as near as lust as fire to smoke."

4. The hardening power of sin. It petrifies spiritual sensitiveness and tenderness. As Burns so well expresses it:

"I waive the quantum of the sin,  
The hazard of concealing;  
But och! it hardens a' within,  
And petrifies the feelin'."

5. Sooner or later all extenuations fail, and the shifting of the blame on God or chance or circumstance. There comes one at last to the naked soul, and pointing accusing finger, says, "Thou art the man."

"And self to take or leave is free,  
Feeling its own sufficiency:  
In spite of science, spite of fate,  
The Judge within thee, soon or late,  
Will cry, 'Thou are the man!'  
Say not, I would, but could not, He  
Should bear the blame who fashioned me.  
Call a mere change of motive, choice!  
Scorning such pleas, the inner voice  
Cries out, 'Thou art the man!'"

Edgar Allan Poe has used with dramatic effect Nathan's words, "Thou art the man," in one of his detective stories. In order to force confession, he puts the body of the murdered man in a wine-case, so adjusted on springs that when the lid is raised by the murderer, the body will sit up and point the finger at him, while a ventriloquist will make the dead lips say, "Thou art the man!"

6. The reproach of Uriah has found expression in noble song:

"The Ark of God is in the field,  
Like clouds around the alien armies sweep;  
Each by his spear, beneath his shield,  
In cold and dew the anointed warriors sleep.

"And can it be? thou liest awake,  
Sworn watchman, tossing on thy couch of down;  
And doth thy recreant heart not ache  
To hear the sentries round the leaguered town?"



"Oh, dream no more of quiet life;  
 Care finds the careless out; more wise to vow  
 Thine heart entire to faith's pure strife;  
 So peace will come, thou knowest not when or how."  
 —*Lyra Apostolica.*

7. On the gracious words of pardon, "The Lord hath put away thy sin," Keble, in his "Christian Year," thus writes:

"The absolver saw the mighty grief,  
 And hastened with relief;  
 The Lord forgives; thou shalt not die:  
 'Twas gently spoke, yet heard on high,  
 And all the band of angels, us'd to sing  
 Who many a month hath turned away  
 With veiled eyes, nor owned his lay,  
 Now spread their wings and throng around  
 To the glad mournful sound,  
 And welcome with bright, open face  
 The broken heart to love's embrace.  
 The rock is smitten, and to future years  
 Springs ever fresh the tide of holy tears  
 And holy music, whispering peace  
 Till time and sin together cease."

—Keble, "Sixth Sunday after Trinity."

It has been not improbably supposed that a connection exists between David's great sin, through its hardening of his yet impenitent heart and

VIII. *His Treatment of the Conquered Ammonites*, II Samuel 12:31 and I Chronicles 20:3.—As this matter calls for particular and honest treatment let us first of all look at the text in three English versions. The American Standard Revision renders the two paragraphs thus: "And he brought forth the people that were therein, and put them under saws, and under harrows of iron, and under axes of iron, and made them pass through the brick-kiln; and thus did he unto all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned unto Jerusalem," I Sam. 12:31. "And he brought forth the people that were therein, and cut them with saws, and with harrows of iron, and with axes. And thus did David unto all the cities of the children of Ammon. And David and all the people returned to

Jerusalem," I Chron. 20:3. The margin puts "to" for "under," and adds: "Or, with a slight change in the Hebrew text, 'made them labor at saws, etc.?'"

Leeser's Jewish English version copies in both passages the American Revision. The Romanist Douay English version thus renders II Samuel 12:31: "And bringing forth the people thereof, he sawed them, and drove over them chariots armed with irons and divided them with knives, and made them pass through brick-kilns: so did he to the children of Ammon. And David returned with all the people to Jerusalem." I Chron. 20:3: "And the people that were therein he brought out: and made harrows, and sleds, and chariots of iron, to go over them, so that they were cut and bruised to pieces. In this manner David dealt with all the cities of the children of Ammon: and he returned with all his people to Jerusalem."

With the text thus before us the first inquiry is, What mean these passages, fairly interpreted? Do they mean merely, as the margin of the American Revision intimates, that David enslaved his captured prisoners, putting them to work with saws, harrows and axes, and at brick-making, or, that he put them to torture by sawing them asunder, driving over them with iron-toothed harrows, mangling them in threshing machines, chopping them up with axes, cooking them alive in brick-kilns? How stand the commentators? Josephus, adopting the torture interpretation, says, "He tormented them and destroyed them."

The comment in the Romanist version on II Sam 12:31 is, "Sawed"—Heb., "he puts them under saws and under rollers of iron, and under knives, etc." The Jews say that Isaiah was killed by being sawed asunder; to which punishment Paul alludes, Heb. 11:37. "Brick-kilns, or furnaces." Daniel and his companions were thrown into the fiery furnace, Dan. 3:6-12, Esth. 13:7. Salien blames Joab for what seems too cruel. But though he was barbarous and

vindictive, we need not condemn him on this occasion, no more than his master; as we are not to judge of former times by our own manners. War was then carried on with great cruelty. With these agree substantially, Kirkpatrick in Cambridge Bible, Blakie in Expositor's Bible, "The Speakers' Commentary," "The Pulpit Commentary," Jamieson, Faucett & Brown, Geikie and many others.

On the contrary, Murphy on I Chron 20:3, following the idea of the margin in American Standard Revision, says, "As saws, harrows or threshing drags, and axes or scythes, are not instruments of torture or execution, it is obvious that David did not 'cut' them, but forced or 'put' them to hard labor as serfs with instruments of husbandry, or in the making of bricks, as is added in Samuel. The verb rendered 'cut' is nowhere else used in this sense, but in that of ruling, and therefore employing in forced labor." Nor does he stand alone. Many authorities on both sides might be added. But these are sufficient to set the case before you. In extenuation of the "torture" interpretation the following argument may be considered: David was under the Mosaic law. That law bears on two points:

1. The law of war for captured cities, Deut. 20:10-14: "When thou drawest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it. And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that are found therein shall become tributary unto thee, and shall serve thee. And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it: and when Jehovah thy God delivereth it into thy hand, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword: but the women and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take for a prey unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which Jehovah hath given thee."

2. The *lex-talionis*, or law of retaliation, *i. e.*, "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, etc." Under the first law a city carried by storm was devoted to destruction, which custom unfortunately prevails in modern wars. Under the second law, the evils practiced on others were requited in kind. See case of Adoni-bezek, Judges 1:5-7. Applying this second law, the cruel things done by David to the Ammonites, under the "torture" interpretation of our passages, had been practiced by them against others then and later. See Amos 1:13. They caused their own children to pass through the fire to Moloch, hence the retaliation of the brick-kiln.

The weight of authority seems to favor the "torture" interpretation, and yet how readily does a humane mind turn in preference to Murphy's rendering. If this "torture" interpretation be true (and we must count it doubtful) then we need not cry out too loud in horror at the torture of prisoners by North American savages, and we may rejoice at the coming of One who in His Sermon on the Mount gives us something higher and better than the *lex-talionis*.

In the case of the Moabite prisoners made to lie prostrate and measured in bulk by a tape-line, one third to live and two-thirds to die, we find something more merciful than in the case of the Ammonites, but sufficiently revolting in the wholesale mathematical method of selecting the living by lot.

The black and white beans for the Mier prisoners impress more favorably. The sum of the truth is that war in any age, now as well as then, "is hell." The reconstruction measures forced on the conquered South after the war between the States surpassed in the bitterness of its prolonged anguish all the quick tortures of saw, harrow, axe and brick-kiln inflicted on the Ammonites. No language can describe the height, depth, length, breadth of the horrors

of reconstruction; not a fleeting agony like being sawn asunder, or burnt in a brick-kiln, but a deliberate harrowing of the South back and forth and criss-crossing for twenty-five years, every tooth in the harrow red-hot, until the whole harried country found expression for its hopeless woes in the Lamentation of Jeremiah:

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?  
Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow?"

There was no measurement of the prostrate South by tape-line, sparing a part, but one vast humiliation extending from Virginia to Texas.

And if Jehovah sent condign punishment on Nebuchadnezzar, the wicked axe of His vengeance for the spirit with which this desolation was brought on sinning Jerusalem and the self-complacency of the deed, so will He yet in His own way visit His wrath on the land of those who had no pity on the desolate South.

The Jews are accustomed to excuse David's apparent ingratitude for Moab's past kindness to his father and mother, and his seeming disregard of the ties of kindred through Ruth, on the score that Moab murdered his parents when trusted to their hospitality. Of this there is no historic evidence. A better reason lies in the fact that Moab joined the conspiracy with Ammon, Syria and Edom to destroy David and his kingdom.

### QUESTIONS

1. Cite the passages which show that David's wars closed in a blaze of glory.
2. What said Cromwell to the painter of his portrait?
3. What always the character of inspiration's portrait-painting?
4. What the three great sins that darken this part of David's career?
5. What books show the voluminous homiletical use of the first and greatest sin?
6. What Taylor's outline?
7. What Psalms, in order, throw the greatest light on his heart experiences of this sin?
8. What the precursors of this sin, preparing for his fall?



9. What the sin itself in its manifold nature?
10. What its aggravations?
11. What evidence that David's sin was on his conscience before the visit of Nathan?
12. What four things impress the mind in Nathan's words to David?
13. What may you say of David's confession of sin?
14. What the two-fold verdict on the confession, and how does it explain our Lord's saying on the unpardonable sin?
15. What the time penalties inflicted, and which the mildest?
16. In what ways is the sincerity of David's penitence evidenced?
17. What two doctrines in David's words concerning his child, "He shall not return to me but I shall go to him," and what the comfort therefrom?
18. Concerning the evidence of sincere repentance in Psalm 51, what says Carlyle?
19. How did it affect Voltaire?
20. What Psalm the model expression of the happiness of the forgiveness, and how does Paul use it?
21. What the first lesson of the application on the experience of David arising from this sin?
22. What the second, and Virgil's expression of it?
23. What couplet on one sin provoking another?
24. Cite the passage from Burns on the hardening power of sin.
25. Cite the stanzas on "Thou art the man," and give Edgar Allan Poe's use of the phrase.
26. Cite the stanzas on the reproach of Uriah.
27. Cite Keble's lines on "The Lord hath put away thy sin."
28. What the two interpretations of I Sam. 12:31 and I Chron. 20:3, and which do you adopt?
29. What scriptural argument may be made in extenuation of the "torture" theory of interpretation?
30. How do the Jews excuse David's treatment of the Moabite captives, and what the better reason?

## XX

### BRINGING UP THE ARK AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CENTRAL PLACE OF WORSHIP

*Scriptures:* References in the Harmony, pp. 125-133

THE wars are now all over, and there has come a period of rest. The first thing that impresses David's mind is this: "I have made Jerusalem the capital of the nation, and Mount Zion is the chief place in Jerusalem, but in order to keep this people unified, God must be present. Off yonder at Gibeon is the tabernacle and the brazen altar, a part of the people worshipping there, and there is an altar of sacrifice but no altar at Jerusalem. Ten miles off yonder at Kirjath-jearim is the Ark; it has been there forty-eight years. Lost in the days of Eli to the Philistines, and returned by the Philistines and stopped at that place, and there another part of the people are worshipping." You can see how David's mind would be fastened upon the thought that he must bring that Ark with its symbol of divine presence to his capital, but in order to bring it he must have a place to put it, so he selects a site for it and builds a tent, something like the tabernacle which Moses built, which was still at Gibeon, and it remained there until Solomon built the temple. After Solomon built the temple, the tabernacle was no longer regarded. It passes out of history.

It has been a characteristic of this man's life to consult God in everything that he does. Now the priest carried two jewels on his Ephod called the Urim and Thummim, and

through the Urim and Thummim God answered questions propounded. That Ephod with the Urim and Thummim had been carried by Abiathar to David in the cave of Adullam. All along through life he had that with him, and through these brilliant jewels in some way, we do not know just how, God answered questions propounded. There was also instituted an order of prophets who became the mouth-pieces of Jehovah, so that if a man wanted to know Jehovah's will he would go to the seer, or prophet, as David went to Nathan, and as Saul went to Samuel. These were two ways in which God communicated with the people—the priest way, through the Urim and Thummim, and the prophet way, through their inspiration. It is the object of David to gather together at Jerusalem everything sacred—the Ark, tent, and altar, and the precious Urim and Thummim, so that here now in every way he may hear from God.

Sometimes God communicated with individuals in dreams and visions, but ordinarily through the two ways I have pointed out. We see why he wanted to get the Ark up there, and how important in order to perpetuate unity and solidarity of his kingdom; all who would confer with God must come to his capital.

While David was king it was not an absolute monarchy. There was what was called the Convocation of Israel—the general assembly. This section commences: "And David consulted with the captains of thousands and of hundreds, even with every leader." Notice that he did not settle matters by a mere *ipse dixit*—"words spoken by himself." It was not by mere royal edict. He wanted the people to see and commit themselves to it, that this was the best thing to do for the nation. Sometimes a pastor becomes arbitrary in deciding what to do when he could accomplish his object a great deal better if he would confer with his brethren. David was not just a boss; he wanted everybody

committed. After this consultation it was decided that they would go for the Ark, and our text tells us how they brought it from Kirjath-jearim on a cart drawn by oxen, and that when the oxen stumbled and the cart looked as though it was going to turn over, Uzzah, one of the men who had been guiding it, reached out his hand to stop it, and God struck him dead instantly. That made a deep impression upon David and the people—as deep as when Nadab and Abihu offered strange fire upon the altar and the lightning leaped from God and destroyed them; an impression as solemn as when at Peter's words Ananias and Sapphira fell dead under the stroke of God. The question is, why? The answer is found in the Mosaic law—that while carts might be used to carry the external things, the posts of the enclosure, and the curtain of the enclosure, the things of the sanctuary had to be carried by men, and staves were fitted into each piece heavy enough to require it so that four men might carry it. They might put the other things in a cart, but these sacred things had to be borne by men. In the next place, only certain men could touch it without death. They must not only be of the tribe of Levi, but of the family of Kohath. In Numbers we have the order of the encampment of the twelve tribes, three on each of the four sides; the Levites made an inner circle, and the position of the Kohathites and their duties. Whenever the trumpet sounded the Kohathites had to pick up the Ark and carry it. In this case the law was violated, and God, in order to show that there must be reverence for sacred things, and that His precise commands must be carried out, made the breach on Uzzah.

We now come to a question of David, and it is a great text—I Chron. 13:12: "How shall I bring the Ark of God home to me?" What a theme for a sermon! If I were to preach on that I would show that wherever the Ark was there was safety and blessing. After it stopped at Kirjath-

jearim that place was blessed; after it stopped at the house of Obed-Edom that home was blessed. Since that Ark was a symbol of divine presence and divine guidance, it was a supreme question, "How shall I bring the Ark of God home to me?" How shall I get the Ark of God into my family, so that there will be safety, guidance, peace and love? You see what kind of a sermon could be made out of it.

The whole vast crowd went back to Jerusalem and left the Ark there. It was a good thing to have, but a bad thing to touch. It stayed at the house of Obed-Edom three months, and every hour it brought a blessing to that home. Our text tells us that David had made him houses in the city of David and prepared a place for the Ark, if he could ever get it there: "How shall I bring it home to me?" The house that David built for himself was a palace.

The riches that he had made, the commerce that he had instituted, culminated in a treaty with Hiram, king of Tyre. Tyre was the great naval power of that age—what England is now—and through his alliance with Hiram he obtained the best artificers in wood and metal, skilled workmen, and cedars from Lebanon. These huge trees were floated to Joppa, and from Joppa brought across the country to Jerusalem, and so David had a fine house. When he went into that house the day it was finished, he wrote a song—the 30th Psalm. I told you about his gratitude; whenever a blessing came, it brought immediately from him an expression of thanksgiving to God. He wrote the 30th Psalm and sang it at the dedication of the house. He dedicated this house of his to God. The song commences:

"I will extol thee, O Jehovah; for thou hast raised me up,  
And hast not made my foes to rejoice over me.  
O Jehovah my God,  
I cried unto thee, and thou hast healed me.  
O Jehovah, thou hast brought up my soul from sheol;  
Thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit."



I told you that in studying the Psalms, you would get the interpretation of the inner life of David, and that you could tell from the Psalms what events of his life most impressed him. Arrange the Davidic Psalms in order, as they express the life of David. You will commence, of course, with the 23rd, then the 8th, etc. There was a great difference between the Cave of Adullam and this fine palace. Some people do not get a home until late in life. Lorenzo Dow used to sing that he never had a home, and when a friend made him a present of a home, he declined it because it kept him from singing his favorite hymn.

David, hearing that the blessings of God had been on Obed-Edom, and wanting this blessing brought to Jerusalem, studied the law, and the law told him how to handle the Ark; that the Kohathites should bear it, the Levites only should come near it; so he set out again with a vast host—nearly a thousand singers—to go after the Ark.

Three chief singers led with cymbals, then three more men led the lute or psaltery-crowd, and three more men led the harp-crowd, and the priests blew the trumpets for signals. On page 127, I Chron. 15:19, we have: "So the singers, Heman, Asaph, and Ethan, were appointed, with cymbals of brass to sound aloud; and Zechariah and Aziel, and Shemiramoth and Jehiel, and Unni and Eliab, and Maaseiah and Benaiah with psalteries set to Alamoth." "Alamoth" means "female choir;" "Sheminith," "male choir." He started out to get the Ark home, and when he got to the place they sang this song, the 15th Psalm:

"Jehovah, who shall sojourn in thy tabernacle?

Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?

He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness,

And speaketh truth in his heart;

He that slandereth not with his tongue."

Then when the Kohathites lifted up the Ark, he said, "Let God arise, and His enemies be scattered," the song that

Cromwell sang before battle. And now having picked up the Ark, the priests with the trumpets gave the signals to the cymbal-band, the psaltery-band whose singers were maidens, and to the harp-band. When that vast host drew near to Jerusalem, they sang the 24th Psalm:

“Lift up your heads, O ye gates,  
And be yet lifted up, ye everlasting doors.”

They marched in and deposited the Ark in its place in the tent, and then David repeated the words of Moses: “Return to thy rest, O Lord,” then followed refreshments, and then followed the benediction.

I will not go over the pageantry, but will present this thought: The Harmony tells us, page 128, “On that day David first ordained to give thanks unto the Lord, by the hand of Asaph and his brethren.” In other words, as soon as he got the Ark in its place, he instituted that remarkable worship which has never been equalled from that day to this; there was something every day, morning sacrifice and evening sacrifice. He appointed twenty-four thousand Levites to various services around the sanctuary. There were twelve different bands, twenty-four pieces each, for each month of the year, and on great occasions these 288 pieces would be in one grand band with a choir of 4,000 voices; but every month of the year a certain band would know that it would have to go in. There were a great many singers, male and female; singers corresponding to cymbals, singers corresponding to harps, and singers corresponding to cornets. I do not suppose that history has a parallel to this organization of music. It became somewhat greater in Solomon’s time, but David was the organizer.

We now come to one of the most important lessons in the Bible, page 131. You will understand that Deut. 12: 10, 11, is the key passage for interpreting the present section. Here is the direction that after they get over into the

promised land and their enemies are subdued, the kingdom is settled, all the wars ended, then God will designate a central place of worship for His house. David was familiar with the passage in Deuteronomy. He now believes that the provisional days are over, and that the time has come for God to have a fixed habitation where all must come, in fulfillment of that passage, and he purposes in his heart to build the most magnificent house for God that the world has ever seen, II Sam. 7: 1-3. He was not mistaken in the divine purpose to have a central place of worship; he was not mistaken that Jerusalem was the place, but he was mistaken as to the time when, and the man by whom this glorious temple of God should be erected. It is important for you to see wherein he was mistaken and wherein he was not mistaken. God commends him for his zeal: "It was well that thou didst purpose this in thine heart." "That is a good thing, but you are not the man to do it."

The Bible assigns two reasons why David was not the man. In I Kings 5: 3, Solomon, who was the right man, uses this language: Thou knowest how that David, my father, could not build a house for the name of Jehovah his God for the wars which were about him on every side, until Jehovah put these under the soles of His feet. In other words, the military power of David had not fully given rest; the time of rest had not fully come; a partial rest had come, but not the full rest necessary to the establishment of this house. Solomon then adds: But now Jehovah my God hath given me rest on every side; there is neither adversary nor evil occurrence. That is the first reason.

We find another reason in I Chronicles. David is speaking: "But God said unto me, Thou shalt not build a house for my name, because thou art a man of war, and hast shed blood." He refers to it again as follows: "But the word

of Jehovah came to me saying, Thou hast shed blood abundantly, and hast made great wars: thou shalt not build a house unto my name, because thou hast shed much blood upon the earth in my sight." First passage I Chron. 28:3; second passage I Chron. 22:8.

Now go back to the passage in Deuteronomy: "When you have gotten over into that country and have obtained rest from all your enemies, then this permanent house of God shall be built." David mistook, (1) the time—the wars were not yet ended; (2) the person—he had been a man of war and had shed blood abundantly, and the builder of the house of God must be a prince of peace. We will have use for this thought when we come to consider the antitype. Whereupon the message to David, the message of our text (and I want you to see that this divine message to David made the deepest impression ever made upon his mind by any event of his life), made a stronger impression upon the Jewish mind after his time than any preceding thing. You will find the Psalms full of references to it, and the prophets magnify it above every promise, particularly Isaiah, Daniel and Ezekiel, and you will find that this message that Nathan, from God, delivered to David, thrilled the Jewish heart with marvelous expectation of the Messiah, David's son, the Great King that was to come. Frequent reference is made to it in the New Testament, and Matthew's whole gospel was written on the thought of the coming of the King. This is his great theme.

In order to see how this impressed David, notice the exact words spoken to him, II Sam. 7:4-7: "And it came to pass the same night, that the word of Jehovah came unto Nathan, saying, Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith Jehovah, Shalt thou build me a house for me to dwell in? for I have not dwelt in a house since the day that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even unto this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. In all places wherein I

have walked with all the children of Israel, spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to be shepherd of my people Israel, saying, Why have ye not built me a house of cedar?" "During the period of the judges, when I selected a judge like Samson, or Gideon, or Barak, did I at any time say to any of these judges that the time had come to build me a permanent house?" (Read II Sam. 7:8-16). That was the message and it is very easy to see from the context that at the time it made a most wonderful impression upon the mind of David, as you further note from his prayer following right after it. (Read II Sam. 7:18, 19, and I Chron. 17:16, 17). Consider particularly these words: "And this too after the manner of men, O Lord Jehovah." Luther translates that passage thus: "This is after the manner of a man who is God, the Lord." That is to say, such a promise cannot fulfil itself in a man of low degree. The Chronicles passage has it: "Thou hast regarded me according to the estate of a man of high degree." David does not understand that his son Solomon is to exhaust the meaning of this passage.

In order to prove the impression made on David's mind, let us read all of Psalm 72 which closes with the words of David, and ends a book of the Psalms. The subscription is: "The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended." You may easily gather from this Psalm that when this promise was made through Nathan that God would build him a house—house meaning family—except the Lord build a house, they labor in vain to build it, since children are a heritage of the Lord. The King in his mind appears from Psalm 2. (Read Psalm 2:1-8.) Then again in Psalm 110 "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool." This king is to be a priest according to the order of Melchizedek. Then in Psalm 89. (Read 89:2-4.) Notice again in Psalm 45. (Read the entire Psalm.) Now we want to know how



this promise to David impressed the mind of the prophet. (Read Isaiah 11: 1-10.)

The genealogies of both Matthew and Luke prove that Jesus was a descendant of David. (Read Luke 1:31-33 and 68-70.)

Another passage (Read Hebrews 1:5). "Again" here refers to Christ's resurrection. His soul had gone up to God at His death on the cross to make atonement, and after the atonement returned for the body, and when the resurrection took place God said, "Let all the angels of God worship Him." Again, in Hebrews, he says that Moses built a house, the tabernacle, and Solomon, the lineal son of David, built a house, the temple. But the temple that Solomon built was out of unfeeling rock, unthinking stone, quarried as rough ashlar from the mountains; then by certain processes smoothed and fashioned into things of beauty, to be fitted into the earthly temple of the Lord, which is a type of human being, quarried as rough ashlar from the mountains of sin; then by marvelous works of regeneration and sanctification, they become smooth ashlar ready for fitting into the temple of God, the living temple, to be a habitation for God, through the Spirit, at the end of the world. See also the last chapter of Revelation.

My point is, that while this promise of God through Nathan rested for the time being on Solomon, who did build a house, that it looked to a higher than Solomon, to a more distant day. Let us read Luther's translation again: "This is after the manner of a man who is God, our Lord." When you study the vast literature of the Old Testament—say such a series as Hengstenberg's "Christology" or Hengstenberg's "Kingdom of God," or any good commentary on II Sam. 7 and parallel passages in Chronicles, you will find that they regard this promise made to David as the most remarkable ever made. The prophetic light grew brighter all the time. Way back yonder the seed of the

woman, Abel, then Seth, Shem, Abram, Isaac, Jacob.....  
David, but here the Messianic light becomes most brilliant in this promise.

### QUESTIONS

1. What the general conditions of affairs at this point, and what prompted David to bring up the Ark from Kirjath-jearim?
2. In what three ways did God communicate with His people, and the bearing of these on the removal of the Ark and Tabernacle to Jerusalem?
3. What course did David pursue, and the lesson therefrom, what incident here shows the sagacity of the Ark and the impression made by it, and what Mosaic law was violated here?
4. What text here for a sermon, and the line of thought suggested?
5. Give an account of the building and dedication of David's house.
6. What course did David pursue before attempting again to bring up the Ark?
7. Describe the procession that went after the Ark. What Psalm did they sing as they started?
8. What did David say when the Kohathites lifted up the Ark, and what general sang it before battle?
9. What song did they sing as they approached Jerusalem, and what did David say when they deposited the Ark in the tent?
10. Describe the course of worship instituted by David.
11. Cite the direction for the establishment of the central place of worship; what David's purpose concerning it; wherein was he not mistaken, and wherein was he mistaken?
12. Why was not David the man to build the temple?
13. What message brought to David by Nathan, what impression did it make on his own mind, on the Jewish mind, and what O. T. and N. T. references to it?
14. What Luther's translation of, "And this too after the manner of men, O Lord Jehovah," and what its meaning?
15. What the impression made on David's mind, and what the proof?
16. How did this promise to David impress the mind of Isaiah?
17. Who was the immediate fulfillment of this promise to David, who the remote fulfillment, and what the N. T. proof?

## XXI

### DAVID'S KINDNESS TOWARDS JONATHAN'S SON; BIRTH OF SOLOMON; FAMILY TROUBLES; THE THREE YEARS OF FAMINE

*Scriptures:* References in Harmony, pp. 133, 134, 138

**O**UR present discussion commences on page 133, II Sam. 9: 1-13, David's kindness toward Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth.

When Jonathan's child was five years old, there came to his mother's home an account of the death of the father on the battlefield of Gilboa, and as the nurse that carried him was frightened and ran with the five year old child, she stumbled and fell, or let the child fall, and it crippled him for life. Jonathan had acquired a very considerable estate. The subsequent history referring to Mephibosheth will appear in a later chapter. David's kindness to Mephibosheth will give us the conclusion of the history. It certainly is a touching thing that in this connection David remembers the strong tie of friendship between him and Jonathan, and upon making inquiry if there be any left of Jonathan's house, he finds that there is one child, this crippled son, and he appoints Ziba, a great rascal, by the way, as we learn later, to be the steward of the estate, the rents of the estate to be paid to Mephibosheth, and Mephibosheth to eat at the king's table. The closing paragraph, verse 13, "So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem; for he did eat continually at the king's table; and he was lame on both his feet." Spurgeon takes this for a text, and preaches a remarkable

sermon on it. He makes it in a sense illustrate the imperfect saint, the lame feet representing the imperfection, continually feasting at the table of his king. That is the manner in which he spiritualizes it, and by which he illustrates the great privilege of a saint to eat continually at the table of his Lord, to sup with Him and be with Him.

The next point is the birth of Solomon, the fourth son of Bathsheba. He received two names: "Solomon," which means "peace," and "Jedidiah," which means the Lord's "beloved," and an announcement was made by the prophet that this child should be the successor of David.

The next paragraph tells about the family of David, and has an important bearing upon the subsequent history of Absalom. Let us give special attention to this record of David's family. We have names in the Bible of seven of his wives. There were others not named. We have the names of nineteen sons and one daughter. They were the children of his regular wives. He had a good many other daughters not named. Then he had a number of children by his concubines. So we have the names of seven wives and twenty children. There were more wives and more children, but these are enough. I suppose he did not have names enough to go around.

As introductory to the next chapter, which is on Absalom, note that four of these sons became very important in the history. Amnon, the first son, and the son of his first wife, Ahinoam, will figure in the Absalom chapter. The third was Absalom, but his mother was Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur. Geshur is located in the hills of Bashan. These people were left there contrary to the divine law; that is the law first violated. God told them not to permit any Canaanites to remain in the Promised Land, but we learn in Joshua 13:13 that the Geshurites were allowed to remain. Another law was, as you learned from Deut. 7, that the Israelitish people should not marry into

these tribes. David violated that law by marrying the daughter of the king of Geshur. So there are two violations of the law in connection with Absalom. Absalom was half Geshurite and half Israelite. The next son of any particular note was the fourth son, Adonijah. We come to him later. His mother was still a different woman, about whom we do not know anything in particular. The next son in the history is Solomon, the tenth son. The first son of importance in the history is Amnon; second important in history (third son) Absalom; third son important in history by a different mother is Adonijah; and the fourth important son (the tenth son) Solomon. The law in Deuteronomy says that if they should select a king, he should not multiply wives; there is the third law violated. So, in going back to the past violations of the law of God, the evils of polygamy are manifest in David's history. There would necessarily be jealousies on the part of the various mothers in their aspirations for their sons. It is said that every crow thinks its nestling is the whitest bird in the world, and every mother thinks her child is *E Pluribus Unum*. She is very ambitious for him, and she looks with a jealous eye upon any possible rival of her child. These four sons—Amnon, Absalom, Adonijah and Solomon, all illustrate the evils of polygamy.

Yet another law was violated. Kings now make marriages for State reasons; for instance, the prince of England will be contracted in marriage to some princess of France, or a princess of England contracted in marriage to a prince of Spain, like Philip II. Through these State marriages some of the greatest evils that have ever been known came upon the world, and some of the greatest wars. When David married the daughter of the king of Geshur, there was a political reason for it; he wanted to strengthen himself against Saul, and that gave him an ally right on the border of the territory held by Saul. We will find Solomon



making these political marriages, marrying the daughter of the king of Egypt, for instance. That is the fourth law violated, all in connection with Absalom. I name one other law, a law which included the king and every other father, that his children should be disciplined and brought up in the fear and admonition of God. That Eli did not do, and David did not do. The violation of that law appears in the case of Absalom.

In running comment on our text we next consider from page 138 National Calamities, II Sam. 21:1: "And there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David sought the face of the Lord." In the book of Deuteronomy, Moses in his farewell address sets before the people so clearly that they could not possibly misunderstand, that famines and pestilences are God's messengers of chastisement; that if they kept God's law they should be blessed in basket and store, but if they sinned He would make the heavens brass above and the earth iron beneath.

This famine resulted from a drought. When the drought first commenced, no particular attention was paid to it, except that everybody knew that it meant hard times. The second year came and still no rain, no crops, no grass, and it began to be a very serious matter. When the third year came, it became awful, and men began to ask what was the cause of it, and they remembered God's law that when they sinned against Him, He would send famine and pestilence upon them. David determines to find out the cause, so he goes before the Lord and asks Him the reason of this terrible chastisement on the land, and the answer is given in our text: "And the Lord said, It is for Saul, and his bloody house, because he put to death the Gibeonites."

Let us look at that case of Saul. Saul was king of Israel; David had been anointed to succeed him, and there was sharp jealousy between David and Saul, particularly upon Saul's part, and he was seeking methods to strengthen him-

self. One thing that a king needs, or thinks that he needs, in order to strengthen himself with his adherents, is to have places to give them—fat offices, estates to bequeath to them. Saul, being a poor man himself, looks around to see how he can fill his treasury and reward his followers, particularly the Benjamites, and right there in the tribe of Benjamin live the Gibeonites. After the fall of Jericho, one of the Canaanitish tribes determined to escape destruction by strategy. So they sent messengers to Joshua in old travel-worn clothes, with old bread in their haversacks, as if they had been a long time on their journey. They met Joshua and proposed to make a covenant with him, and he, judging from their appearance and from the rations they carried, supposed that they must have come a long way and were, therefore, not people of that country, entered into a solemn covenant with them. They thus fooled him and the princes of Israel swore an oath before God that they would maintain their covenant with the Gibeonites. Very soon the fraud practiced was found out, and while they could not, for their oath's sake, kill these people, they made them "hewers of wood and drawers of water"—in other words, servants. They let them remain in the land in that servile position, a kind of peonage state. These Gibeonites had been living there, holding their land, yet servants of the people for about 400 years, uncomplainingly submitting to their position, but on account of the oath made by Joshua, retaining their possessions.

Saul, as I said, looked around to find resources of revenue and said to himself, "Suppose we kill these Gibeonites and take what they have." And he and his sons, "the bloody house of Saul," made an attack upon these people and took everything that they had in the world and divided it up among the Benjamites. Saul afterwards boasted of it. He said, "What has David to offer you, and who will give you estates, as I have given you estates?" This act upon

his part, (and his family assisted him in it,) was unprovoked, cold-blooded, murderous and confiscatory, with reference to their property, upon a people that had been faithful as servants for 400 years. And even up to this time in David's reign these people were yet deprived of any redress.

God did not overlook that wrong. He holds communities responsible for community sins, nations responsible for national sins, and just as He sent a plague upon the children of Israel on account of Achan, so He sent this famine upon Israel, because in the night-time this poor, poverty-stricken people, who had been defrauded of home and property and almost destroyed by the "bloody house of Saul," prayed unto God. God hears such cries. Whenever a great national injustice is done, as Pharaoh did to the Israelites in Egypt, retribution follows, and as the Spaniards did to the Indian tribes whom they subjugated, particularly in Cuba, there came a day when the thunder of American guns in Santiago avenged upon Spain the wrongs that Cuba had borne for 400 years. "There is no handwriting in the sky that this people is guilty of a great inhumanity or national wrong, and therefore I will send a pestilence," and He sends it and leaves them to inquire the cause.

He sent this famine, and the third year men began to inquire as to its cause, and God answered by pointing out this sin. If that is the cause this nation must remain under the scorching fire of that drought until expiation is in some way made for that sin. David sent for the remnants of the Gibeonites and acknowledged that this wrong had been done to them, and that they, as remnants of the multitude that had been slain by Saul, had a right to blood revenge; so David said to them, "I will do what you say to right this wrong." They said the children of the man that did this shall die; he himself is out of the way, but they are living. "'The bloody house of Saul,' seven of them, must be given up to be put to death as we think fit and where we

think fit, so that compensation may be made. They must be gibbeted, crucified, and they must remain there in Gibeah, Saul's home, and the scene of the crime that he committed; they must remain there until the offense is expiated."

David declined to let any of Jonathan's sons help pay that penalty. He exempted Mephibosheth, who was eating continually at his table, and who, doubtless, judging from the character of Jonathan, had nothing to do with this grievous crime. He selected two sons of Saul's concubine, Rizpah. She was a very beautiful woman, and after Saul's death there came very near being a civil war about her. She occasioned disturbances between Abner and Ish-bosheth, who was then king. She had two sons, one named Mephibosheth, the younger one, and the older one, Armoni. Her two sons and the five sons of Merab (not Michal, as the text has it) were taken by the Gibeonites to Gibeah, Saul's home, put to death and then gibbeted, after they had been put to death by crucifixion, or put to death and then crucified. "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." This execution occurred about the time of the passover, and the bodies had to hang there until it was evident that God has removed the penalty. The rain did not come until October, about the time of the last feast, so these bodies hung there six solid months. Rizpah took her shawl, or cloak, and made a kind of a booth out of it, and resting under it, she stayed there six months and kept off carrion birds and beasts of prey from these bodies—two of them her children—all day and all night long—in her mother love, wishing that the curse could be lifted from the bones of her children; wishing that the disgrace could be removed; wishing that they might be taken down and have an honorable sepulture. Six months after she took that position it rained, the drought was broken, the famine stopped, and the sin was appeased. David heard how this mother had remained there and it touched his heart. He had the bodies taken down and also

had the bones of Saul and Jonathan brought from Jabesh-gilead, and accorded to all an honorable burial.

What this woman did has impressed itself upon the imagination of all readers of the Bible. The undying strength of a mother's love! It impressed itself upon the mind of an artist, and a marvelous picture was made of this woman fighting off the carrion birds and jackals. It appealed to the poet, and more than one poem has been written to commemorate the quenchless love of this mother. A mother's love suggested by the case of Rizpah is found in an unpublished poem by N. P. Willis. He represents the famine as so intense that the oldest son snatches a piece of bread from a soldier's hand and takes it to his mother, and the youngest son is represented as selling his fine Arab horse for a crust of bread and bringing it to his mother. When I was a schoolboy at old Independence, our literary club had a regulation that every member should memorize at least one couplet of poetry every day and recite it. I memorized a great many. I remember my first two. The first one was

"The man that dares traduce because he can  
With safety to himself is not a man."

The second one was

"In all this cold and hollow world  
There is no fount of strong, and deep, and deathless love  
Save that within a mother's heart."

Dore, who illustrated "Paradise Lost," Dante's "Inferno" and the Bible, was a wonderful artist. He had 45,000 special sketches and paintings. Perhaps in the Dore gallery of Bible illustrations this picture appears. The artist puts in his picture seven crosses; on one a carrion bird has alighted, and others are coming, and peeping out of the rocks are the jackals gathering to devour these bodies, and there is Rizpah frightening away the birds and jackals. It is a marvelous picture.



## QUESTIONS

1. Rehearse the story of Mephibosheth, and David's kindness to him. Who preached a sermon on II Sam. 9:13?
2. What great king was born just at this time, what his names, and the meaning of each?
3. How many wives had David, and how many children?
4. What four sons of David became important in history, what five violations, in connection with Absalom, of the law of Moses, and what the evils of polygamy in David's case?
5. What national calamity just now, its cause, and how ascertained?
6. Rehearse the story of the Gibeonites.
7. What principle of God's judgments here set forth?
8. How was this offense expiated?
9. Who were exempted, and why?
10. How did Rizpah show her mother-love in this case, and its impress upon the world?

## XXII

### THE SIN OF NUMBERING THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, ITS PENALTY AND THE HISTORY OF ABSALOM

*Scriptures:* References in Harmony, pp. 138-141, 134-137

ON PAGE 138 of the Harmony preserved in both II Samuel and Chronicles, is an account of another great affliction from God, and this affliction took the form of a pestilence in which 70,000 people perished. In one account it is said that the Lord moved David to number Israel, in the other that Satan instigated it. God is sometimes said to do things that He permits. There was a spirit of sinfulness in both the nation and king, on account of the great prosperity of the nation. Some preachers holding protracted meetings, and some pastors in giving their church roll, manifest a great desire to put stress upon numbers. So David ordered a census taken of the people. We search both these accounts in vain to find the law of the census carried out, that whenever a census was taken a certain sum of money from each one whose census was taken was to be put into the sanctuary. It was not wrong to take a census, because God himself ordered a census in Numbers. The sin was in the motive which prompted David to number Israel on this occasion. Satan was at his old trick of trying to turn the people against God, that God might smite the people. Oftentimes when we do things, the devil is back of the motive which prompts us to do them. It is a strange thing that the spirit of man can receive direct impact from another spirit.

It is also a strange thing that a man so secular-minded as Joab, understood the evil of this thing better than David. Joab worked at taking this census for nearly ten months, but did not complete it; he did not take the census of Levi or Benjamin. Chronicles gives the result in round numbers, which does not exactly harmonize with II Samuel, one attempting to give only round numbers. Both show a great increase in population. After the thing was done, David's conscience smote him, he felt that here were both error and sin; and he prayed about it, and when he prayed, God sent him a message, making this proposition: "I offer thee three things" (try and put yourself in David's place and see which of these three things you would have accepted): (1) "Shall seven years of famine come unto thee in thy land?" He had just passed through three years of famine, and did not want to see another, especially one twice as long as the other. (2) "Or wilt thou flee three months before thy foes, while they pursue thee?" He rejected that because it put him at the mercy of man. (3) The last alternative was, "Or shall there be three days' pestilence in thy land?" And David made a remarkable answer: "Let us fall now into the hands of the Lord, for His mercies are great; and let me not fall into the hands of man." I would myself always prefer that God be the one to smite me rather than man. "Man's inhumanity to man makes countless millions mourn." It is astonishing how cruel man can be to man and woman to woman, especially woman to woman. Always prefer God's punishment; He loves you better than anyone else, and will not put on you more than is just; but when the human gets into the judgment seat, there is no telling what may happen. Before this three days' pestilence had ended 70,000 people had died. The pestilence was now moving upon the capital, and David was going to offer a sacrifice to God and implore His mercy. When he saw the angel of death with his drawn sword, about to swoop down

upon Jerusalem, then comes out the magnanimity of David: "Lo, I have sinned and I have done perversely; but these sheep, what have they done?" Who greater than David used similar language in order to protect his flock? Our Lord in Gethsemane. Thereupon God ordered a sacrifice to be made, its object being to placate God, to stay the plague, a glorious type of the ultimate atonement.

When I was a student at Independence, the convention met there, and Dr. Bayless, then pastor of the First Baptist church at Waco, took this text: "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema Maranatha." He commenced: "When the flaming sword of divine justice was flashing in the sunbeams of heaven, and whistling in its fiery wrath, Jesus interposed and bared His breast, saying, 'Smite me instead.'" Bayless was a very eloquent preacher. But though our Lord interposed, yet on Him, crushed with imputed sin, that sword was about to fall. His shrinking humanity prayed, "Save me from the sword!" But the Father answered, "Awake, O Sword, smite the shepherd and let the flock be scattered." And here we find the type.

The threshing floor of Araunah became the site of Solomon's temple. It was the place where Abraham brought his son, and bound him on an altar, and lifted up the knife when the voice of God called: "Abraham, stay thy hand, God himself hath provided a sacrifice." There Abraham started to offer Isaac; there the temple was afterward built, and the brazen altar erected on which these sacrificial types were slain. I ask you not only to notice David's vicarious expiation, but also the spirit of David as set forth in verse 24, page 141: "Neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the Lord my God, which cost me nothing." That old Canaanite man was a generous fellow, and offered to give him that place for such a purpose and to furnish the oxen for the sacrifice, but David refused to make an offering that cost him nothing. Brother Truett preaches a great sermon on

that subject: "God forbid that I should offer an offering unto the Lord that costs me nothing." When he wants to get a really sacrificial collection; wants people to give until it hurts, he takes that text and preaches his sermon. We must not select for God that which costs us nothing. I will not say tens or hundreds, but I will say thousands of times in my life I have made such offerings where it cost me something—where it really hurt.

*History of Absalom.*—In the last discussion it was shown that there had been a number of antecedent sins in connection with Absalom: (1) It was a sin that the Geshurites had been left in the land; (2) It was a sin that David had married a Geshurite; (3) That he had married for State reasons; (4) That he had multiplied wives; (5) That he did not instruct and discipline Absalom. Absalom stands among the most remarkable characters of the O. T. He was the handsomest man in his day, according to the record. He was perfect in physical symmetry and body. That counts a good deal with many people, but here it is not a case of "pretty is that pretty does." He had outside beauties to a marvelous degree. In that poem of N. P. Willis, he assumes that Absalom's body is before David in the shroud, and says that as the shroud settled upon the body it revealed in outline the matchless symmetry of Absalom. Absalom had remarkable courage; there is nothing in the history to indicate that he was ever afraid of anything or anybody. Again, he had great decision of character; he knew exactly what he wanted; he was utterly unscrupulous as to the means to secure it. However, he was a man of most remarkable patience; he had passions and hate, and yet he could hold his peace and wait years to strike. That shows that he was not impulsive; that he could keep his passions under the most rigid control. The idea of a young man like Absalom under such an indignity waiting two years and then carefully planning and bringing his victims under



his hand and smiting them without mercy! That is malice aforethought. He alone could make Joab bend to him; he sent for Joab, but Joab did not come; then he sent to his servant saying, "Set fire to Joab's barley field." That brought him! Spurgeon has a sermon on that. You know that a terrapin will not crawl when you are looking at him unless you put a coal of fire on his back. Absalom put a coal of fire on Joab's back. Then, to show the character of the man, he could get up early in the morning and go to the gate of the city and listen to every grievance in the nation, pat each fellow on the back and whisper in his ear, "Oh, if I were judge in Israel your wrong would be righted!" There is your politician. Now for a man to keep that up for years indicates a fixedness of purpose, absolute control over his manner. Whoever supposes Absalom to have been a weak-minded man is mistaken. Whoever supposes him to have been a religious man is mistaken. He had not a spark of religion.

David's oldest son, Amnon, commits the awful offense set forth in the first paragraph of this section. Words cannot describe the villainy of it, and if Absalom under the hot indignation of the moment had smitten Amnon, he would have been acquitted by any jury. But that was not Absalom's method. He intended to hit and hit to kill, but he was going to take his time, and let it be as sudden as death itself when it came. David refrains from punishing Amnon. Under the Jewish law he could have been put to death at once, and he ought to have been, but David could not administer the law; seeing his own guilt in a similar case, stripped him of the moral power to execute the law.

*You will find that whenever you do wrong, it will make you more silent in your condemnation of wrong in others.*

We now come to a subject that has been the theme of my own preaching a good deal: "Now Joab, the son of Zeruiah, perceived that the king's heart was toward Absalom," but he

also perceived that that affection was taking no steps to bring about a reconciliation, so he falls upon a plan. He sent a wise woman of Tekoa to find David, feigning a grievance as set forth here, who among other things said, "We must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again," *i.e.*, from one against whom our anger is extended, but in behalf of whom we are interceding. The fact that God had not killed him was proof that He was sparing him that he might repent. "But God deviseth means whereby His banished shall not be perpetually expelled." The application intended is this: "Now David, you are doing just the other way. You have only a short time to live, and when you die your opportunities of reconciliation are gone forever. Imitate God; devise means to bring your banished one home." David acted on this advice and sent Joab after Absalom, but he did not imitate God fully; he had Absalom brought to Jerusalem, but would not see him. Absalom waited there under a cloud for three years, and when he could stand it no longer, by burning Joab's barley field he forced him to bring about a reconciliation. Absalom's object in bringing about this reconciliation was to put him in position to rebel. He knew that the tenth son, Solomon, was announced as the successor to David, and he was the older son, and under the ordinary laws of primogeniture entitled to the kingdom. So he determines to be king.

David at this time, as we learn from Psalm 41, was laboring under an awful and loathsome sickness—a sickness that separated him from his family, from his children and from his friends. This caused him to be forgotten to a great extent. It was a case of "when you drop out of sight, you drop out of mind." While the people saw nothing of David, they were seeing much of Absalom; he had his chariot and followers, and paraded the streets every day, and his admirers would say, "There is a king for you! We want a

king that is somebody!" David in retirement, Absalom conspicuous, making promises and being the oldest son, captured the hearts of the people. Among these was Ahithophel. Then Absalom sent spies out all over the country and said, "When you hear the trumpet blow, you may know that Absalom is reigning." He went down to Hebron and announced himself as king. When the word is brought to David that the people have gone from him, there seems to be no thought in his mind of resistance; he prepares to leave the city, leave the Ark of God and the house of God. Leaving his concubines and taking his wives and children with him, he sets out, and upon reaching Mt. Olivet, looks back upon the abandoned city, and weeps. A great number of the Psalms were composed to commemorate his feelings during this flight. Both priests, Abiathar and Zadok, wanted to take the Ark with them, but David sent them back, saying he wanted some there to watch for him and send him word. Never in the annals of time do we find a more lively historic portraiture of men and events than here. Each lives before us as we read: "Ittai, Abiathar, Zadok, Hushai, Ziba, Shimei and Abishai."

### QUESTIONS

1. How do you harmonize II Sam. 24:1 and I Chron. 21:1?
2. What the sin of this numbering of Israel?
3. What the lessons to preachers?
4. What was David's course?
5. What God's proposition to David?
6. What David's answer, and reason for his choice?
7. How was the plague finally stayed?
8. What type here, and the N. T. fulfillment?
9. What the site of Solomon's temple?
10. What historic events connected with this place?
11. What great text for a sermon here, and who has preached
- a noted sermon from it?
12. Rehearse here the antecedent sins in connection with Absalom?
13. What his physical appearance?
14. Analyze his character.

15. What the lesson to preachers from the sin of Amnon and David's attitude toward it?
16. What the lesson for David from the woman of Tekoa?
17. How did David receive it?
18. To what expedient did Absalom resort, and why?
19. What David's disadvantage and Absalom's advantage here?
20. What David's course when he saw that the hearts of the people had turned toward Absalom?
21. What the nature of this part of the history?

## XXIII

### DEATH OF ABSALOM; PREPARATION FOR SOL- OMON'S ACCESSION AND THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE

*Scriptures:* References in Harmony, pp. 141, 142, 148-163

WE should continually bear in mind that in order to interpret the inner life of David, the Davidic Psalms must be studied in connection with the history. I never got a true insight into the character of this man, into his religious life, into his staying powers, until I studied the history very carefully in connection with the Psalms. I spent one whole summer studying the history of David in the Psalms.

David stopped at Mahanaim; that is the place where Jacob met the angelic host, as the name signifies. While Absalom was making his muster, David was also mustering a host; while Absalom was godless and prayerless, David was penitent for his sins, humble toward God, and courageous toward men. Absalom appointed as his commander-in-chief a nephew of David, a son of Abigail; David had for his commanders Joab, Joab's brother Abishai, and the Gittite, Ittai.

One of the most touching things in connection with David's stay at Mahanaim is the coming together from three different directions of three friends to help: "Shobi the son of Nahash of Rabbah of the children of Ammon, and Machir the son of Ammiel of Lo-debar, and Barzillai the Gileadite of Rogelim, brought beds, basins, and earthen vessels, and wheat, and barley, and meal, and parched corn,



and beans, and lentils, and parched pulse, and honey, and butter, and sheep, and cheese of kine, for David, and for the people that were with him, to eat." It is noticeable always, however, that a man of strong character will draw to him friends whose friendship cannot be broken. David's character developed friendship so that people would come to him and stand by him to the very last extremity. Of course there were some traitors. Absalom could draw men to him, but could not hold them.

The battle between the opposing armies took place in what is called the "Wood of Ephraim," a very considerable forest somewhere near the banks of the Jordan. David's army was in three divisions. He wanted to lead in person, but they objected and he stayed over the gate of the city, with one concern in his heart, deeper than all others, and that was about the fate of his son, Absalom; he was very much devoted to him, foolishly so, as the charge that he gave to each officer as each division marched through the gate indicates: "For my sake deal gently with Absalom." Absalom's army was utterly routed.

I remember preaching a sermon in 1887, when canvassing the state for prohibition, on the text: "Do thyself no harm," basing my argument upon this thought, that no man can cause a harm that he does to terminate in himself. A man might be somewhat excused for doing harm to himself, if he harms only himself. I illustrated Absalom's harming himself in two scenes. First, on that battlefield 20,000 men lay dead; a man goes over the field and tries to identify the slain. He turns over a victim whose face is to the ground, and feels in his pockets to see if he can find anything to identify him, and perhaps finds a letter from his wife stained with his heart's blood. It reads: "When are you coming home? The children every evening sit out on the gatepost and look toward the scene of war until their eyes fill with tears, then come in and say, 'Mamma, whenever is papa

coming home?" Never! There are 20,000 men like him, 20,000 wives like that wife, and 40,000 children like those children, all harmed because Absalom did harm to himself! The other scene of the picture was the old man, the father, at the gate of the city, listening for news of the battle, and when the message is received, colder than lead and sharper than the dagger, it strikes his heart. Stripping off the crown and purple robe, he wraps himself in sackcloth, and puts ashes on his gray head. It breaks his heart. He wrings his hands and sobs: "O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God that I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" In view of the father's unspeakable grief, it was not right for that young man to harm himself, since the harm did not terminate in him.

That sermon changed more votes than all the speeches that had been made. Power in preaching consists in having an imagination that will enable you to make a scene live before you.

I preached another sermon in Waco that I think I shall never forget. It was an afternoon sermon, when all the churches in the city were united. I took a double text: "I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me." That was the first part of the text. The other part was, "Absalom, my son, my son, would God that I had died for thee." I contrasted the sorrow of David over his two children; the separation between him and his baby was temporary; they would soon be together forever, but the separation from Absalom was an eternal separation. He knew his child was lost forever, which accounts for his inconsolable grief. The power of that sermon was in vivid stress of two things: holding one picture up and saying, "Look at that," and holding up the opposite picture and saying, "Look at that."

The rebellion perished with the death of Absalom, but David was so utterly overwhelmed with his grief that he did not follow up his victory, and really he became sinful

in his grief. It took the heart out of his own people. They became ashamed and sneaked back to town, feeling that their victory was dreadful to their king. Joab, though his heart was as hard as iron, was right in his rebuke; but it was very unfeelingly done, especially as he had been the one, in violation of orders, to take the life of Absalom. This is what he said, "Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, which this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines; in that thou lovest them that hate thee, and hatest them that love thee. For thou hast declared this day, that princes and servants are naught unto thee: for this day I perceive, if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well. Now therefore arise, go forth, and speak comfortably unto thy servants; for I swear by the Lord, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry a man with thee this night." That was pretty straight talk. but it was successful, and it waked David up. He was so stunned by his grief that he took no steps to follow up his victory.

The question of his restoration came up with the people this way: "Shall we now take the king back to his throne? Absalom is dead and there is no other king." And then David made overtures to Judah, his own tribe; he sent to Zadok and Abiathar, the priests, saying that the tribe of Judah was his own flesh and blood, and they had said nothing about his coming back. He then made this promise: "As the Lord God liveth I will make Amasa, Absalom's general, commander-in-chief of my armies." It would have been all right to dismiss Joab, but it certainly was impolitic to put a rebellious general at the head of his army. We will see directly that it cost Amasa his life.

The men who stood by David and won his victory for him felt like they were strangers here with these people who had been against him and the enemies' general made their

commander. Whenever a strong feeling of resentment exists there will always be somebody to give voice to it, hence the shout of Sheba: "To your tents, O Israel!" You will hear that cry again in the days of Rehoboam, when the same ten tribes say, "To your tents, O Israel! What have we in the son of Jesse?" The tribes were always loosely held together, and it was easy for them to separate and disintegrate. For some reason, not stated, Amasa was very dilatory to take command and subdue Sheba, and David commands Abishai, not Joab, to take command and pursue Sheba until he is caught and destroyed. Joab goes along as a volunteer, and on the way he meets Amasa whom he thus addressed: "Art thou in health, my brother?" And then stabs him under the fifth rib, just as he had killed Abner; then he usurps command, Abishai giving way to him, and put down the rebellion very speedily. David did not feel strong enough to displace him again, so after that Joab was commander-in-chief, too big a man to be put out!

In going back to Jerusalem there were several touching things: In the first place that cursing man, Shimei, comes out and makes submission and asks to be forgiven. David forgives him for the present. You will see later how he made provision for bringing him to judgment, but he forgave him for the present. The darkest blot on David, outside of the sin against Uriah, is in this paragraph, the meeting with Mephibosheth. Mephibosheth comes to meet him and David sternly asks why he had not gone out with him when he left Jerusalem. He gently explains that he was crippled and could not walk, and that he ordered his beast to be saddled and his servants went off and left him; that he is now glad to welcome David back, and that it was a falsehood that he ever intended to profit by David's misfortunes. David then restores to him part of his property, and lets that rascal Ziba keep half of it. In all this transaction Mephibosheth comes out in a much more favorable

light than David: "Let him take it all forasmuch as my lord, the king, has come in peace unto his own house." This does not show off David very well. It is customary for everybody in going over this part of the history, to speak with great favor of old Barzillai. Everything he did was pure disinterestedness. David offers compensation, offers to give him a permanent home in Jerusalem. He says this would not be a favor to him, as he is old and blind and cannot taste anything or discriminate. Then David asks him if there is not somebody in his house that he can promote, and the son of old Barzillai is promoted.

We will now consider the preparation David made for the succession to guard against any other rebellion. He wanted the succession established in his life-time. If you are familiar with English history you know that a nation is in a great stir every time its king gets sick, unless it is clearly established who shall succeed him. The question for succession was a serious one when Queen Elizabeth died, and again at Queen Anne's death, when the kingdom was transferred to the house of Hanover. Some of the most thrilling pages in history are devoted to these transition periods. David wanted no trouble about the succession; so he assembled the great convocation, consisting of princes, captains of thousands, and hundreds, etc., and caused them to recognize Solomon as his successor, and he was so announced. Every officer in the kingdom was pre-committed to Solomon. And yet, notwithstanding this precaution, Adonijah, the third son prominent in history, now the oldest, since Absalom is dead, determined that he should be king. He adopted Absalom's expedients, prepared chariots and men to run before him. He got Abiathar, one of the priests, and Joab to stand with him and went off to a palace called En-rogel and there to be announced as king. David was too old and feeble to do anything, but the prophet Nathan sent the mother of Solomon to him to let him know



what was impending. David took steps instantly to have Solomon crowned king, and proclamation made. Adonijah, when he heard that Solomon was king, returned to Jerusalem and begged for mercy, and the rebellion was ended. This led to the displacement of Abiathar as priest, and led to the permanency of the high priest in the line of Zadok, who stood firmly with David.

The crowning act of David's life, the one most profitable in its lesson to us, was his provision for the erection of the great temple. All the devoted treasure from Saul's wars and his own, all the spoils of many nations subdued by him, immense treasures of gold, silver, precious stones, precious metal, and cloth were stored up for this purpose. Then by revelation from God the plans and specifications of the building and its furniture received by him were given to Solomon, accompanied by a solemn charge to build the house. But yet the gathered material was not sufficient for so great an enterprise. So David at this great convocation engineered the most remarkable public collection known to history—the most remarkable in its method, its principles, and in the amount raised.

*Method:* First of all he, himself, out of his own proper fund, made a cash donation never equalled since, not even by Carnegie nor Rockefeller. The princes, and then all subordinate officers, followed the lead of their rulers.

*Principles:* (1) It was a "prepared" donation. (2) The preparation was "with all his might." (3) The donation was for God's house and cause. (4) It was prompted by "affection for God's cause." (5) It was purely voluntary. (6) It was preceded by a "willing consecration of himself to God." (7) It was followed by great joy because a willing and not an extorted offering.

*Amount:* It staggers credulity to accept the vast total. The total, by any fair method of calculation, goes beyond anything else known to history. No off-hand, impulsive col-

lection could have produced such a result. It was a long-purposed, thoroughly prepared contribution flowing from the highest possible motives.

*Lesson:* Our preachers today should lay it to heart. We need the lesson particularly in times of financial stringency. We see our preachers scared to death without cause, and our people demoralized. We need the application intensely. We should know that God is never straightened in himself—that today, if we willingly consecrate ourselves to God first of all, like the Phillippians who first gave themselves to the Lord, and if we have true affection for God's cause, and if we purpose great things in our hearts, and prepare a collection, with all our might appealing to the voluntary principle in the loving hearts of God's people, and ourselves have strong faith in God who is able even to raise the dead, then the stringency of the times will only brace us and call out our courage. But if we are whipped inside, if we feel that we are butting our heads against a stone wall, if we take counsel with our fears and become timid and hesitating moral cowards when we should be heroes, of course we will miserably fail. We will become grasshoppers in the sight of opposing giants, and grasshoppers in our own sight. Hard times, difficult situations, are methods of providence to prepare us. They are touchstones of character, revealing who are weaklings and who are heroes. Go off to thyself; shut out the world. Shut up thyself alone with God, fight the battle to a finish once for all in thine own heart, and then with the sublime audacity of faith, do thy work for the Lord.

### QUESTIONS

1. Contrast Absalom and David as to character.
2. Who were chosen as commanders by Absalom and David respectively?
3. What the touching incident at Mahanaim?
4. Give an account of the battle between David's army and Absalom's.

5. How did David show his concern for Absalom?
6. Show in two ways how Absalom in harming himself, harmed others.
7. Contrast David's sorrow upon the death of his infant with that upon the death of Absalom.
8. How did the rebellion end?
9. Give Joab's rebuke, and its effect on David.
10. How was David restored as king of the people?
11. What his mistake, and its result?
12. What touching events on David's return to Jerusalem?
13. What preparation did David make for a successor?
14. Who at once became competitor for the kingship?
15. What his method?
16. How did this episode end?
17. What the crowning act of David's life?
18. How was the provision made?
19. What the method?
20. What the principles?
21. What the amount?
22. What the lesson, and its application?

## XXIV

### THE ARMY; CIVIL ORGANIZATION; INTERNATIONAL COMMERCE; RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION

*Scriptures:* References in Harmony, pp. 142-148

THE scriptural materials for the life of David present him as a great poet, and we are accustomed to think of him in the light of his poetry, particularly of his elegies and Psalms. We think of him as a great warrior from his youth up in the successful campaigns he waged in pushing out the boundaries of the kingdom until they fulfilled the promise to Abraham. Then we think of him as a legislator, as he devised many useful laws, but we seldom give him due credit for his organizing power. A great writer has said that what Alfred the Great did for England, and what Napoleon did for France, David did for his kingdom in the way of organization. I will take up the items of this organization and give you a clear conception of it.

I. *The Army*.—His army roll showed 288,000 men. It would have been a great burden to a small kingdom like this to keep up a standing army of 288,000 men; so he divided his army into twelve great corps. Only one corps would serve a month; in the course of the entire year the 288,000 men would have served each one of them one month. In that way the spirit of military drill and organization was kept up. In case of war he could call out the whole 288,000 and have a vast army of drilled men. So his army organization, we will say, consisted of 288,000 men, 12 army corps

of 24,000 each, each corps serving one month in the year, coming on in succession. Each corps was subdivided into, say, 24 regiments of 1,000 men each, and each regiment into ten companies of 100 men each, something like the "century" of the Roman Legion, a centurion commanding 100 men. These were the subdivisions of the main army. There was a bodyguard always kept near the king's person. I do not recall that anywhere the number of this bodyguard is given. Sometimes they are called "Cherethites" and "Pelethites." Whatever their name, it was a permanent bodyguard of which Benaiah was the commander.

Then there was an order of men sometimes compared to the knighthood, the 600; the original organization of this 600 was in the Cave of Adullam, when David was an outlaw, and it was perpetuated all through his life. This 600, every one a hero and champion, was divided into two bands of 300 each. These bands were divided into companies of 100 each, and the one hundreds were divided into twenties. The six captains over the hundreds and the chief captain over all make the famous seven. The captains over the twenties make the famous thirty. Every man of this band of 600 was an experienced warrior and had signalized himself on many eventful occasions, and every one of the thirty and every one of the seven, that is, the thirty-seven officers, were especially famous.

Let us see if we have this army organization clear: 288,000 divided into 12 corps of 24,000 each; each corps commanded by its own general, with Joab as general-in-chief; each 24,000 serving one month and no more unless there was a war. In addition to that, a bodyguard, the famous 600; the three captains of the first 300 were the most worthy; the three captains of the other 300 were somewhat less worthy. Each 100 was divided into twenties; the captains over the twenties make the thirty worthies; then the six captains over the one hundreds, and a chief cap-



tain of the 600 make the thirty-seven worthies. That is David's military organization.

II. *The Civil Organization.*—The civil organization was based upon the law of Moses. Each tribe was governed by its prince, and by a graded system of subordinate judges, chiefs of thousands, chiefs of hundreds, chiefs of fifties, and chiefs of tens, and the ordinary affairs pertaining only to the tribes were attended to by these men. That was derived from the Mosaic administration, but in David's time we come to quite a different need, the matters relating to God and His kingdom. For this work David appointed 6,000 Levites as judges and he distributed them over the whole territory. They represented the national affairs only. These 6,000 Levites had the following functions:

1. They were what we would call "federal judges"—judges over matters that pertained to the general government.

2. Sanitary officers.

3. They were charged with education. There never was such a spirit of general education as grew up in this organization of David. First of all, there were the schools of the prophets. They were kept up and had been ever since Samuel's time. In these schools of the prophets they studied the whole law of God, and particularly music, vocal and instrumental. They also studied everything that related to the prophetic office. That was the curriculum of the schools of the prophets, and that was where David got his education. These 6,000 Levites, each one in his own section, had charge of the educational work, and the result was that when Solomon came to the throne you find him the most thoroughly educated man since the days of Moses. Dr. Taylor, in his "King of Israel," well says:

"The pre-eminence attained by Solomon in all the branches of education is, to my mind, an evidence of the advanced condition of the nation generally in this department; since, unless

a good foundation of elementary knowledge had been imparted to the youth of the land as a whole, it is hardly possible to account for the appearance of such a man as Solomon in that age. No doubt he was endowed with preternatural wisdom; but this, as is usual in the economy of Providence, would be engrafted upon a high degree of ordinary culture; and the question forces itself upon the historical student, 'Who were his tutors, and who taught them?' You do not find the loftiest mountains rising isolatedly from some great plain. The highest mountains are never solitary peaks. They belong usually to some great chain, and are merely the loftiest elevations in a country the general character of which is mountainous; and in the same way the greatest scholars appear, not among ignorant people, but among those who have a high average of education, and in countries where a good substratum of instruction is enjoyed by the common average of the community. The historian, Froude, has put this thought admirably when he says, 'No great general ever arose out of a nation of cowards; no great statesman or philosopher out of a nation of fools; no great artist out of a nation of materialists; no great dramatist, except when the drama was the passion of the people. Greatness is never more than the highest degree of an excellence which prevails around it, and forms the environment in which it grows.' Now if these views be correct, the rise of Solomon, who was so conspicuous for his intellectual culture and scientific attainments, may be regarded as a proof that in the reign of David, and more particularly, perhaps, in the zenith of his administration, education was extensively diffused, and earnestly fostered by him among the tribes."

When we come to study Solomon, in his time, we will find a reference to the wise men of the day. These were the men who grew out of David's educational system. Solomon is but the product of the educational department set up by David. Let us now see what we have learned about these Levites:

1. They were federal judges, passing sentence on all matters pertaining to the nation at large.
2. They were sanitary men, looking after all matters pertaining to the health of the people.
3. They were educational men.
4. They were the stewards of what is called the "royal property." We would call it now, in our government, "revenue." By a single paragraph we are told of David's overseers of the treasure-houses of the tribes, of the vineyards, of the orchards, pastures, etc., so that there must have

been what in England would be called "crown-lands," land that belonged to the general government. In every tribe and in every important place you would see a treasure-house.

Let us see what that treasure-house was for. The system of worship provided for a central place of worship, and for the support of those who conducted matters at the central place of worship there was a tithe in cattle, grain, vineyards, etc., so you see that it would be necessary to have store-houses all over the nation where these tithes could be gathered up. It took a very consummate organization to put all these matters in such working order that there could be no deficiency in the royal treasury from any part of the land, nothing deficient in sanitary conditions. Nothing anywhere escaped the Argus eyes of the judicial system of government. Moreover, David developed—

III. *An International Commerce.*—This was a tremendous item in the contribution to the wealth of the nation. The kingdom produced more than it could use in the way of clothes, and it was necessary to export surplus products and to bring in things that could not be produced at home. You can imagine the continuous stream of caravans from Damascus to Egypt and from Tyre to Arabia, across the country. It would be necessary to carry to foreign countries various kinds of produce in exchange for the things brought to David from them. In Solomon's time you will see an enlargement of this commerce. He not only reached the Atlantic Ocean, as in David's time, through the fleets of Tyre, but China and India by means of the fleet at Ezion-geber on the Gulf of Akabah. David would want cedars from Lebanon, and would want to employ skilled artisans and architects. David was a great builder. He built a fine palace for himself, and he built many fine buildings in Jerusalem. In paying for these artisans, architects and materials from foreign countries he would use the surplus products of his own kingdom, carrying from Judah to Tyre

by caravan, to Damascus by caravan, to Egypt, to Arabia. This necessitated treasure-houses and storehouses, and David had them by his system of organization.

IV. *The Religious Organization.*—The religious organization surpassed anything that this world has ever known. At no time in the history of the world, in any nation, was there ever such a perfect organization of religious service. After David was made king of all Israel at Hebron, where he had been reigning over Judah seven years, he captured Jerusalem and made that the central place of worship, and there the great feasts were celebrated. He is going to have a system of worship that will not only impress the minds of his own people, but all people who come in touch with them, so that in the days of the captivity the Babylonians would say, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion," and they would reply, "How can we sing the songs of Zion in a strange land?" and would hang their harps on the willow trees.

There were 38,000 Levites over thirty years of age in this religious organization, 6,000 of whom were set apart for judges, sanitary officers and educators, leaving 32,000 for the temple service. These 32,000 men were divided as follows: 24,000 into 24 courses of 1,000 each, set apart to minister at the sanctuary; in other words to be servants of the priests for anything the priests would want done; 4,000 set apart as porters; and 4,000 as singers. The priests, that is, the sons of Aaron, were classified into 24 courses. This classification continued until the New Testament time. Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, belonged to the course of Abia, and when it came his turn to go and act as priest in the temple, it was determined by lot, and the lot fell upon him to offer incense as priest. The priests were divided into 24 courses, and the singers divided. There were 24 bands of these singers, not all present at one time, but all could be grouped at national festivals, when the Passover

came, or Feast of Tabernacles, or Pentecost, or the great Day of Atonement; then the entire 4,000 singers would be there with their various instruments of music; the cymbal-band, the psaltery-band, the harp-band, the trumpet-band, Alamothe, or female choir, Sheminith, or male choir—everybody in that 4,000 would understand just what services were requisite on his part, and just when. One twenty-fourth of the time he had to be there, and on all national occasions he had to be there. Offerings had to be made every day, morning and evening, and when you take into consideration the Sabbatic cycle, which consisted of the weekly Sabbath, every seventh day; the new-moon Sabbath, every lunar month; the annual Sabbaths, the Passover, Tabernacle, or Pentecost festivals; the land Sabbath, all of every seventh year; the jubilee Sabbath, every fiftieth year, each and all with its appropriate and imposing ritual, you get some idea of David's religious system.

When we come to study the book of Psalms, one of the most attractive books in the whole Bible, we will there find that the service of the second temple was based upon David's plan, and led to our present arrangement of the Psalms. No writer has yet, with sufficient vividness, described the worship at Jerusalem in the Old Testament times. Rev. J. H. Ingraham, the Episcopalian, who committed suicide, attempted to describe it in letters that a daughter of an Egyptian Jew wrote to her father about how the temple service impressed her in the time of Christ. These letters are found in his "Prince of the House of David."

That was the religious organization. One living in any part of the country, from Hamath on the northwest to the Euphrates on the northeast, to Edom on the southeast, to Philistia on the southwest, and a case coming up, there was an appropriate officer to whom his case would be referred; everything was arranged for—judicial, executive and legislative. Some things were attended to in the national con-



vention. This occurred when the great festivals brought the people together in the grand convocation, or when something of special importance was to be done with reference to succession, as we saw when David called the whole nation to accept his son Solomon as king.

### QUESTIONS

1. In what spheres was David great?
2. Describe his army organization: (1) How many enrolled? (2) How divided, and why? (3) What the subdivisions?
3. Describe David's body-guard. Who the commander?
4. Describe the organization of his famous 600; (1) Its divisions; (2) Its subdivisions; (3) Who the famous 37?
5. Describe the civil organization: (1) What part derived from the Mosaic administration? (2) What additions in David's time? (3) What the functions of the 6,000 Levites? (4) What proof of the diffusion of education by David? (5) What was the treasurehouse?
6. Describe his system of international commerce: (1) Its necessity; (2) How carried on?
7. Describe his religious organization: (1) How does it compare with the other religious organizations of the world? (2) How many and who constituted it? (3) Its divisions and subdivisions? (4) Its relation to the book of the Psalms?

## XXV

### BOOKS ON THE REIGN OF SOLOMON; THE EMPIRE OF SOLOMON; SOLOMON'S INHER- ITANCE FROM HIS FATHER

*Scriptures: References in Harmony, p. 164*

**W**E will begin on the reign of Solomon at page 164 of the Harmony.

First of all I will give you a list of the books obtainable by you on the reign of Solomon. Your Bible text of the reign of Solomon includes the first eleven chapters of I Kings and the first nine chapters of II Chronicles—twenty chapters in all. These twenty chapters cover the reign of Solomon.

Josephus comes next. I am naming books for students of the English Bible, not of the Hebrew Bible. The pertinent parts of Josephus are chapters 14 and 15 of the Seventh Book of Antiquities, and the first seven chapters of the Eighth Book, *i.e.*, nine chapters of Josephus. You can read those nine chapters of Josephus at one sitting.

The next book I commend very highly on account of the simplicity of it (anybody can understand it), and also on account of the soundness and great scholarship of the author. It is Edersheim's "History of Israel," Volume V. In the fifth volume some of the chapters are devoted to the reign of Solomon. Anyone at one sitting ought to be able to carefully read over everything that Edersheim has to say on Solomon's reign.

The next book, the author of which is also a great scholar and a very celebrated man, but not so sound in the faith as

Edersheim, is Stanley's "Jewish Church." There are three volumes, but only some chapters of the second volume treat of the reign of Solomon.

The next book is also one of great scholarship and research, though its author is more of a radical critic than Stanley, and that is Geikie's "Hours with the Bible." There are about eight volumes of that book, but you only want that part on Solomon's reign, a part of the third volume. It is better than either of the others in showing the political relation of Solomon's kingdom to the other kingdoms of the world. It is superb on that.

The next book, by Canon Farrar, "The Life and Times of Solomon," is one of a series of books on the great Old Testament characters. On the Old Testament Farrar is decidedly a radical critic. He is better on the New Testament.

The "Bible Atlas" comes next, which every Bible student and Sunday school teacher ought to have. It is studied in Biblical introduction. Geography must precede history. In this book, pages 69-71, is all you need to consider on the reign of Solomon. It gives you several maps, then it gives you some comparative maps showing relative sizes. What it has to say in a historical way is very fine. You need it all the way through the study of the Bible, for it touches the whole history.

*Some Remarks on Kings and Chronicles.*—The two books of Kings are, in the Hebrew, one book. The division took place when the Septuagint translation was made. This book of Kings covers more than four and one-half centuries, *i.e.*, say from 1000 B.C. to about 585 B.C. Its original material was written by the contemporary prophets of Israel. Some prophet would write the annals of the kings during his time. The names of these prophets are Nathan, Ahijah, Iddo, Isaiah and Jeremiah. Therefore when the Old Testament is divided into three parts—Law, Prophets and Psalms—Samuel and Kings are always included in the Prophets because

the author of the book was a prophet, and because the history itself is prophetic.

The reign of every king of Judah or of Israel later, when the division took place, had its own annalist, and these annalists or historians were prophets. In this book reference is made to a book called the "Acts of Solomon," and from a passage in II Chronicles we infer that it was written by three prophets—Nathan, Ahijah and Iddo. Sixteen times in the book of Kings there is reference to the Chronicles of the kings of Judah. Of course one man did not write all of those chronicles, but each prophet would write the chronicles of his day. There are many references also to the chronicles of the kings of Israel. Our book of Chronicles is a compilation from these original sources, probably by Ezra.

Another remark on the book of Kings: Not only were its authors prophets, but the history was written from a prophetic point of view. The history of Israel is itself a prophecy. Our book of Chronicles is also unique. It is a post-exile compilation, *i.e.*, after the return of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, and therefore it has nothing to say about the ten tribes that went off with Jeroboam; it discusses only Judah. This book commences with Adam and comes down to Ezra's time, on one line of Messianic thought—just one. While we use the material of the book of Chronicles in this Harmony, yet no man can understand the book of Chronicles except by independent study. It must be considered as the historical basis of the new probation after the exile, connecting with Ezra, Nehemiah, Daniel and Esther, and also with the later prophets—Ezekiel, Zechariah, Haggai, and Malachi. Suppose that there was no Bible at all up to I Chronicles; now that book is written so as to reach back to the Creation—to Adam—and furnishes, as I said, the historic basis of the probation of the Jewish people after their return from exile. Confining itself to the

Davidic line and to Judah, it comes on down to the troublous times of the restoration. Ezra, Nehemiah and Esther complete the story.

I discuss somewhat the empire of Solomon. A good map will show that the section conquered by Joshua was small compared with this empire of Solomon. The kingdom of Saul was a very small section, but by the conquests of David the boundary of the empire touched the Euphrates, which river was the boundary for a number of miles. Then the boundary came across to the Orontes River flowing north. Then it came down the eastern slope of the Lebanon Mountains, leaving a narrow strip next the Mediterranean Sea—Phœnicia—which was not a part of Solomon's kingdom, but was under an independent government—Hiram, King of Tyre. From the lower part of Phœnicia the boundary followed the Mediterranean Sea until it came to the River of Egypt. The River of Egypt means one of the branches of the Nile, and that part of the territory David never conquered, but Solomon got it by dowry when he married Pharaoh's daughter. The boundary then strikes across from the River of Egypt to the upper part of the Red Sea, the Gulf of Akabah, at a point called Ezion-geber. That was the seaport through which Solomon's navy reached the Indian Ocean, and the countries of the Orient, as through the seaport of Tyre he reached all the countries on the Mediterranean Sea and even around as far as Britain and Norway—all around the shore of the Baltic Sea. This empire of Solomon is ten times as big as the kingdom of Saul. Consider the difference between 6,000 square miles and 60,000 square miles. You will notice that the eastern boundary of the empire touched the impassable desert at every point of the line. So with the great sea on the west and the desert on the east, there is only a narrow northern boundary and a narrow southern boundary to be safeguarded. You will observe that this empire as established by David and reigned



over by Solomon was for the first time and the last time the greatest Oriental kingdom. There was no contemporaneous Oriental kingdom or empire equal to Solomon's. I am not referring to extent of territory, but to authority, power and rule. The reason is that Egypt has been greatly weakened, and just about Solomon's time an entirely new dynasty comes in with which he intermarries, thus insuring perfect friendship on the south. Then it came at a time before the later Assyria and Babylonia have been established. The old Assyria and Babylonia at this juncture amounted to nothing, and Syria had become a part of Solomon's empire. Through alliances with Phœnicia, which was the great sea power of the world at that date, and Egypt, there was no Oriental government that could compete with the empire of Solomon.

It exactly fulfilled the promise that God made to Abraham as reported in Genesis 15. Just what God promised to Abraham as to the extent of the territory is fulfilled for the first time in David, and remains so throughout the reign of Solomon—but never again. Then it exactly fulfills the prophecy written, as I am sure, by David himself, though attributed to Solomon, contained in Psalm 72. There the extent of his reign is set forth prophetically, as it is also set forth in the great promise made in Sam. 7. The promise in Sam. 7 occasioned the Psalm, and in its higher meaning is to be fulfilled in David's greatest Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, when the empire shall be the world, as told us in the book of Revelation.

Now consider briefly the relation of Solomon's empire with outside nations. There is no chance for internal disturbance after Philistia, Syria, Ammon, Moab and Edom have been conquered by David, but consider the relation of this empire with other foreign countries. First of all, in influence and importance is Phœnicia—just a narrow strip of palm beach on the Mediterranean Sea, with the great

mountains of Lebanon back of it, much like the Pacific slope in California, which is a very narrow slope with the Rocky Mountains back of it, and very much like the same Pacific slope in South America with the Andes back of it. The relation between Phœnicia and this empire was first established by David. Hiram, the king of Tyre, made a treaty with David just after David captured Jerusalem—a treaty, the favors of which were all on one side, *i.e.*, David got the favors. In other words, by virtue of the alliance made between Hiram and David, David got access to the vast timber-lands on the Lebanon Mountains, the finest timber accessible to the then known world. He also got access to the quarries there. You will understand why Hiram would want to make an alliance with David if you will consider that when David captured all this country up to the River Euphrates and down to the River of Egypt he controlled every artery of land-commerce upon which Phœnicia depended. It is difficult to realize the amount of travel and traffic coming down from the Euphrates by Damascus and then to Tyre, and from Tyre distributed to all the Mediterranean nations clear around to the Baltic Sea. Then the other line of trade was from the same Euphrates—the caravan ways to Egypt. They would follow either side of the Jordan. From southern Judea there were three ways into Egypt—one from Philistia following the Mediterranean coast line, one through the middle of the desert, and the one that Moses followed when he led the people out of Egypt. Now, as Tyre had little territory and was dependent upon its commerce, if a foreign hostile nation controlled all of the arteries on the land side, it would break up the commerce on the sea side, for they would have nothing to transport for exchange. This alliance was of incalculable value both to Phœnicia and to the empire of Solomon. The one as a sea power controlled the outlet; the other as a land power controlled the inlet. While Solomon's had a

Mediterranean coast line there were no good seaports on it. Phœnicia was a great commercial country centering in Solomon's time at Tyre. If you want to understand something of the nature of that commerce read Ezek. 27 on Tyre. It is the most vivid description of a commercial nation in the literature of the world. It describes Tyre as a ship of state, showing from what country she drew its products and its mercenaries, and you will find that all of Asia and the northern part of Africa, all the southern part of Europe, all of the islands on the eastern shores of Europe, the British Isles, for instance, are mentioned in that description of the commerce of Phœnicia.

I made a speech once before the Y. M. C. A. in Waco on "The shipwreck of faith." Faith was described—its errors, in various ways. My part of it was to describe the shipwreck of faith. I got my imagery of the shipwreck from Ezekiel's description of the shipwreck of Tyre's ship of state. It is more interesting than any novel—the account of the commerce outgoing from this city—Tyre. It retained its great splendor and magnificence down to the time of Alexander the Great, who conquered it. The empire of Solomon had another relation to Phœnicia which I will discuss at a later time.

We take up now the relation of Egypt to Solomon's empire. Solomon controlled all of the continental trade that reached Egypt because it had to come entirely through the whole length of the territory of Solomon. It was necessary therefore for a good understanding to prevail between the Holy Land and Egypt, and it is the first good understanding since Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Joseph, and as that relation was on account of a new dynasty coming in, so this relation is on account of an entirely new dynasty coming to the front in Egypt. In the later history of Israel you will find that Egypt, Phœnicia, and Babylonia on the Euphrates, and Nineveh, had much to do with this country

in a hostile way. The advantages of the relations are with Israel only so long as it is the greater power. The touch of the empire with Oriental nations is its Euphrates border. There is no great nation at this time on the Tigris or the Euphrates to disturb Israel. The great nations there are coming but they are not, as yet.

"Solomon" means "prince of peace." His reign was a reign of peace—peace with Egypt, peace with Phœnicia, peace with the Oriental nations beyond the Euphrates, and peace with Arabia. Solomon renewed the alliance with Hiram, king of Tyre, and rather cheated him in a trade, very much to Hiram's disgust. That we will learn about a little later. Solomon, partly from political motives, married women of many foreign countries. Thus he secured the southern boundary by marrying the daughter of Pharaoh. He was a "very much married" man.

Let us consider a little more particularly the commerce in Solomon's day. As I told you, his part of the Mediterranean coast furnished very small means for great commerce, because it had no good seaports, and his country, up to David's time, never touched any ocean or great sea in any other direction, but now it touched the Red Sea. Tyre becomes the servant of Solomon in reaching the whole world through the Mediterranean Sea. Then Solomon built a navy with the help of the Tyrian sailors at Ezion-geber down on the Gulf of Akabah. We have an account of a visit he made to that place to see how his ships were coming along. He built a navy there, and through that navy he touched all the East Indies and the nations of the Pacific, all the archipelagoes of the Indian and Pacific Oceans along the eastern and southern shores of Asia. We will come to some interesting accounts of this navy in the history, and of what those ships brought to him.

The land commerce I have described, on the way from the Euphrates to Egypt, and on the same way from the

Euphrates to Tyre. It was a period of activity and travel, in commerce, in trade, in manufacture. It was a live world in Solomon's time.

Our next question by way of introduction is what Solomon inherited from his father. I will give you a summary to show how much Solomon was indebted to his father. Some boys are very fortunate in the father providing for them. In the first place, he is entirely indebted to David for this big territory. He didn't acquire it, but it cost David many a hard, bitter war; many a dreadful fight. On the maps in the "Bible Atlas" you will see where a number of these great battles were fought in David's time, so that Solomon inherited his estate. The only part he added was the little strip of land next to Egypt that came with his marriage with the daughter of the king of Egypt as a dowry, and it didn't hang on any longer than the wife did. The next thing inherited from his father was a united kingdom. He had nothing to do with that. David united the jealous warring tribes. We saw in the history of Joshua their intertribal differences, how their dissensions appear all through the book of Judges, all through the book of Samuel, and all through David's life until he was crowned king of all Israel. The third thing of incalculable value that he inherited from David was organization. That organization reached to every department—say, first, the army. David's military system must have been the seed idea of the present German military system. I don't see where else they got their method of organizing their army on such a large scale except from the account of David's military organization. In the next place, the revenue was organized. Up to David's time there was no revenue system or army. There was a big militia, but very unreliable. David organized both to a nicety, so that from every part of this country the stream of revenue continually flowed into his treasury without intermission.

The next point of organization was religion. From



Joshua's time to David's time the religious movements were on tangential lines. There was no long-settled place to worship; there was no general system of worship; there were no well-settled officers of worship and no adequate ritual. David organized it all. He had his central place of worship; he had his priests divided into twenty-four courses. He had his Levites all organized. He had the ritual of worship established, and he wrote the songs for the entire convocation of Israel. The greater part of the Psalter was written by David. The times of worship were also systematized.

From David's time comes also a thoroughly trained prophetic class. Samuel started it when he established three or four seminaries. From that time on until prophecy in Old Testament times ceased, there was a live prophetic school of men who represented God and spoke to the consciences of kings and of the nation. A corps of these great prophets are turned over to Solomon and work with him. Among them were Nathan, Iddo and Ahijah, and in later reigns many others.

Solomon also inherited an organized educational system with these prophets from David. No intelligent mind can account for Solomon's training and attainments except upon the pre-supposition of a system of public instruction by prophets and priests. His attainments did not come by instinct or revelation. He had gifts, indeed, but when you read the history of Solomon you see the cultivation of the gifts. David's system of public instruction accounts for Solomon. Through the prophets, particularly Nathan, came the fine education with which this man Solomon started in life. Then he inherited from David this alliance with Phœnicia. Moreover, he inherited from David treasures that stagger credulity in magnitude and variety—spoils of all the great wars, gold and silver and jewels of the world.

Commentators are tempted to change the Hebrew texts

when they come to express the amount of the treasures that David accumulated. Everything that would be useful in the great work assigned to Solomon was ready to his hand. He inherited from his father even the plans as well as the material of the temple, which is the greatest thing Solomon ever did—the building of that house. All of its magnitude and the entire plan of it, with minute directions, came down to Solomon from David. The boy had only to reach to his desk and take out complete plans of what he had to do, as a king, and minute directions as to how everything was to be done; the place from which the material was to come, and last of all, the very labor that was to perform the work was organized on a scale that hadn't been equalled since the pyramids of Egypt were built. Now that starts the boy off right well.

Then his father had him installed into office before his own death to prevent any jar in the succession, and had the public men committed to him. The great leaders of Israel in all this great territory were assembled by David and pledged to support Solomon as his successor, and they did commit themselves by oath to his support. Now if the plans and the money and the material for the house and for all his other work, if the alliance and co-operation of other nations, if the organization of his own nation, came from his father, surely he was the heir to an immense inheritance. Not many of us started off that way. The most of us had to scratch right at the start.

The next thing we inquire is, "What did he derive from God?" Of course indirectly all these came from God, but directly from God was first that divine providence which, at this time, brought in a new and friendly dynasty in Egypt, that weakened the Oriental nations so that none of them could be equal in power to Solomon. All this came from God's providence. Then the direct gift of wisdom. It was from God. He didn't earn it, and he didn't learn

it in school. He got knowledge in school: "Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers." But he got wisdom from God. How remarkable that wisdom was we will see in a succeeding chapter.

A new era had dawned on Solomon's people. Heretofore they had lived a very simple life, having little contact with other nations and wishing to have none. Now they are brought in touch with the luxuries of the world through Pharaoh and Hiram. The whole country is on a boom, just such a boom as perhaps was never equalled in after times. Silver and gold become as common as pebbles along the bank of a brook. Agriculture, commerce, architecture, with all the arts and sciences, have quickened and broadened the national life, but with prosperity, commerce and international touch comes danger to religious life. We will see if national alliances and inter-marriages corrupt the pure worship of Jehovah. We will see if the Egyptian and Phœnician gods, with all their cruel and sensual worship, do not invade the Holy Land and prepare the way for the loss of God's favor, the dismembering of the great empire, and its final destruction.

If through the introduction of the false religions of these nations brought into contact with Israel through political and commercial relations, the true, pure religion of God is driven out, then it would have been better if Solomon had been like David in his early days, a poor boy, supporting himself by herding sheep.

The divisions are: 1. The beginning of his reign. 2. The wisdom of Solomon. 3. The glory of Solomon. 4. The fall of Solomon.

### QUESTIONS

1. What books commended on the reign of Solomon?
2. Who wrote the original material for Kings and Chronicles?
3. Who, probably, compiled our book of Chronicles? (2) What its viewpoint? (3) Its purpose?

4. Give boundaries of Solomon's empire. How does it compare with Joshua's territory, with Saul's, and with David's?
5. What promise is fulfilled in this empire, and what prophecy is also fulfilled in it?
6. What the relation of Solomon's empire with Phœnicia?
7. What the relation of his empire with Egypt?
8. What the relation of his empire with Oriental nations?
9. Describe the commerce in Solomon's day.
10. What did Solomon inherit from his father?
11. What did he inherit from God?
12. Describe the new era for Solomon's people, and its effect on their religion.

## XXVI

### SOLOMON'S ACCESSION, MARRIAGE, DREAM AND REMARKABLE WISDOM

*Scriptures:* References in Harmony, pp. 164-168

**T**HIS discussion commences the exposition of Solomon's reign. It will be well for you to have your book open. If you have no Harmony, open your Bible at I Kings 2.

The first eleven chapters in the first book of Kings and the first nine chapters in the second book of Chronicles constitute the scriptural basis of the life of Solomon. We introduce this discussion with three passages of scripture:

1. Deut. 17: 14-20:

"When thou art come unto the land which Jehovah thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are round about me; thou shalt surely set him king over thee, whom Jehovah thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee; thou māyest not put a foreigner over thee, who is not thy brother. Only he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he may multiply horses; forasmuch as Jehovah hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way. Neither shall he multiply wives to himself, that his heart turn not away; neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold. And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, out of that which is before the priests the Levites: and it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life; that he may learn to fear Jehovah his God: to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them; that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he and his children, in the midst of Israel."



On that law mark the method of succession in the Hebrew monarchy. It was not according to the law of primogeniture, *i.e.*, the oldest son does not by law succeed his father. Indeed, we find that it is not according to heredity in a still larger sense. God changed the dynasty from Saul to David. Saul's sons did not succeed him, but He created a new dynasty in David. When we come to study the divided kingdom we will notice quite a number of dynastic changes. But all the time in Judah the king is at least a descendant of David. The dynasty does not change in that kingdom. We have already seen the law of primogeniture set aside in God's dealing with families. For instance, Isaac and not Ishmael becomes the head of the family, and Jacob and not Esau, and we see it extending even to the tribes. Not Reuben, who is unstable, but Judah, became the head of the tribes. Get before you clearly the kind of monarchy established. The king must not be a foreigner, like Herod the Idumean in Christ's time. He must be one of the brethren, and then God must select him. A copy of the Pentateuch must be made especially for him and kept by him, in which he must read every day of his life and live and rule according to its teaching. The Pentateuch is the national constitution. And particularly, he is not to seek honor and riches for himself, and not to seek horses with a view of any return to Egypt, nor must he multiply wives to himself lest through his wives his heart be turned aside from God.

2. I Chron. 22:9, 10. Here is God's selection of David's successor: "Behold, a son shall be born to thee, who shall be a man of rest; and I will give him rest from all his enemies round about; for his name shall be Solomon, and I will give peace and quietness unto Israel in his days: he shall build a house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever." So you see there that God, before this child is born, elects David's successor and

gives his name. "Solomon" is the God-given name. He is also called Jedediah and Lemuel. But God gave him the name of Solomon.

3. Psalm 72 is too long for me to quote, but you should read it and count it next in thought in the discussion. It is David's prayer for this son, who succeeds him. The superscription says, "A psalm of Solomon," but that is not true. Solomon never wrote Psalm 72, but David did. The subscription says, "The prayers of David, the son of Jesse, are ended." David prays that God may give the king judgment and righteousness in order that he may properly judge the poor, and save the needy, and break in pieces the oppressor. And he goes on to describe that he shall have dominion from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth, and how the kings of the earth shall bring their gifts. Verse 17 says,

"His name shall endure forever;  
His name shall be continued as long as the sun:  
And men shall be blessed in him;  
All nations shall call him happy."

It closes with "Let the whole earth be filled with his glory." The primary reference is to Solomon. It is more largely fulfilled in the antitype of Solomon, the true Prince of Peace—Jesus. Consider that law, that divine election and that prayer of the old father just as he is passing away, and you have not only the name of Solomon and the character of his reign as a reign of peace, but you have also the prophetic element in Solomon and in Solomon's reign looking forward to Christ.

Our text declares that Solomon was thoroughly established upon the throne of his father David. Solomon was quite a young man, and said to be wonderfully handsome and attractive. His establishment consisted first in the removal of inherited enemies, those that came to him from David's side, who might have disturbed his kingdom. The

first one of these enemies is his oldest brother, Adonijah. Adonijah thought that because he was the oldest son living after Absalom's death, he ought to have the kingdom, and he prepared, as we learn in the history of David, to seize the kingdom, and as David was supposed to be in a dying condition he set up his claim, which was forestalled by David's having Solomon crowned king. Adonijah was forgiven for that offense, but the record tells us of a new offense. He comes to the mother of Solomon. People oftentimes try to reach those whom they wish to influence through the female members of the family, either the mother, the wife, the sister or the daughter. The devil tried to get Adam that way—and got there. Adonijah comes to the mother of Solomon and asks her to obtain the king's permission that he may marry that beautiful young girl taken into David's home and bed in his old age. The ordinary reader sees this as only an innocent request, but you must consider the Oriental custom. The successor of the king took possession of the harem of the preceding king. It is that way now in northern Africa, in Turkey and in other countries. Absalom, you remember, did that in order to certify his claim to succeed his father. The context suggests that Joab was privy to Adonijah's request. It means that though pardoned for the first rebellion, they were still contemplating giving an object lesson before the people that Adonijah was entitled to be king. Solomon understood it in one moment, and commanded Adonijah to be put to death.

That removed all the cause of rebellion in the family. As soon as Joab heard of it, as a proof that he was a party in the matter, he ran to the altar and in accordance with what is called the "law of the sanctuary," took hold of the horns of the altar. Now comes a general library question: Find the law of the sanctuary touching the horns of the altar in the book of Exodus, and state whether Solomon violated

the law of the sanctuary in having Joab put to death while clinging to them. It is a custom, not merely of infidels but of semi-infidel preachers, to charge Solomon with having violated the law of the sanctuary in putting a man to death while clinging to its horns.

Joab was put to death. He was a mighty man. There was no general of his age equal to him. Cromwell resembled him more than any man of modern times, in sternness of character, in quickness of decision and action. He was a nephew of David. David's sister, Zeruiah, had three notable sons, all mighty men—Joab, Abishai and Asahel. David was put to shame more than once in his life through Joab, and on several occasions Joab was greater than the throne. Two of the crimes committed by him—the killing of Amasa and Abner—are punished in this death of Joab. It was on David's conscience before he died that he had permitted this man to live. He had been of great service to David, and it did not seem appropriate that David should, even though justly, put to death one who had been so efficient in establishing him in his kingdom, and yet it was not right that this great man in his ill-doing should go unpunished, and so David bequeathed the solution to Solomon; in his wisdom he must find a way to punish Joab for his past misdeeds. Thus we come to the death of this great man Joab.

It was prophesied that not a man should be left of the house of Eli, the usurping high priest before Samuel, and yet in spite of that prophecy we see Abiathar come to David and join him in the days of his exile and act as high priest, but now this Abiathar who did not follow Absalom, but who did follow Adonijah, and was in the conspiracy to defer the installation of Solomon and his kingdom, is degraded from the priesthood. Because of the friendship he had shown to David he is not put to death, but a conspirer endangers the safety of a monarch and he is sent to

his own home to live as a common man. He occupies office no more, which disposes of that enemy.

It becomes necessary, having disposed of these two enemies, to appoint successors to their great offices. The man after whom I was named, Benaiah, or as we spell it now, Benajah, was appointed to Joab's office, and Zadok, a true lineal descendant of Aaron through his eldest son, is put at the head of the priesthood. This fulfills a prophecy that we considered in the book of Numbers. You remember Phinehas, concerning whom one of the three remarkable declarations on imputed righteousness in the Bible is made. It was prophesied that the descendants of Phinehas should occupy the high priesthood. That is fulfilled now for the first time when Zadok becomes the high-priest of united Israel.

The internal matters all now having been composed, this young man, as young men generally do, proposed to marry. He selected a wife for political reasons. He married the daughter of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. Here a general question: Was the marriage of Solomon to the daughter of Pharaoh a violation of the law not to inter-marry with the people around? Form your own judgment. Some of his marriages we know were violations. He married women that were Edomites and Hittites. The Edomites were kin to him, descendants of Esau, but the Hittite was one of the old Canaanitish nations. He married women from every direction, and largely for political reasons. Touching his first marriage we have Psalm 45. Primarily it refers to the consummation of this marriage. Prophetically it refers to the marriage of our Lord, the true Solomon, with His glorified church. Let us look at some of the references in that Psalm.

"My heart overfloweth with a goodly matter;  
I speak the things which I have made touching the king;  
My tongue is the pen of a ready writer.



Thou art fairer than the children of men;  
Grace is poured into thy lips:  
Therefore God hath blessed thee forever.  
Gird thy sword upon thy thigh, O mighty one,  
Thy glory and thy majesty."

Another part refers to the Bride:

"Kings' daughters are among thy honorable women:  
At thy right hand doth stand the queen in gold of Ophir.  
Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear;  
Forget also thine own people, and thy father's house:  
So will the king desire thy beauty;  
For he is thy lord; and reverence thou him,  
And the daughter of Tyre shall be there with a gift;  
The rich among the people shall entreat thy favor.  
The king's daughter within the palace is all glorious:  
Her clothing is inwrought with gold.  
She shall be led unto the king in brodered work:  
The virgins her companions that follow her  
Shall be brought unto thee.  
With gladness and rejoicing shall they be led:  
They shall enter into the king's palace.  
Instead of thy fathers shall be thy children,  
Whom thou shalt make princes in all the earth.  
I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations:  
Therefore shall the peoples give thee thanks for ever and ever."

Now we have the king presented to us as a puzzled worshipper. That is to say, there was in Jerusalem the Ark of the Covenant, in a special tent made for it by David; but there was at Gibeon the old tabernacle that Moses built and also the great brazen altar that Moses had made. Both were places of worship. Solomon determines to have, as a fitting introduction to his reign in which all people shall participate, the most imposing and magnificent religious service known in the world up to that time, and he proposes to have it at both places, first at Gibeon and then before the Ark of the Covenant at Jerusalem. The old law required only one place of sacrifice. Solomon and others before him might claim that the law was to become operative only after the nation was thoroughly established. Our text says that as a house for God had not yet been built, the people worshiped in high places. All through the books of Judges and



I Samuel, including all the life of David, we see worship occasionally offered at other places than one central place, and particularly was this so after the Philistines had captured the Ark and carried it away. So Solomon determines to hold his first service in the old tent that Moses made, and where the old brazen altar was, and then he would come back to Jerusalem and hold a duplicate service before the Ark of the Covenant in the place where David had put it. In order that this service might be truly national, he sends out a summons to every part of his empire that all the princes and chief men of the nation should come together and participate in this national offering. The record in speaking of it says that he offered a thousand burnt offerings. In the history of Xerxes, the king of Persia, when he was on his way to invade Greece and had come to the Hellespont, he offered a sacrifice of one thousand oxen to the gods. This says, "And Solomon went up thither to the brazen altar before the Lord, which was at the tent of meeting, and offered a thousand burnt offerings upon it." That is a parallel in history.

After this imposing ceremony Solomon slept, and sleeping, dreamed. More than once the Bible tells us that the most of dreams have no significance, but it also teaches us that in a number of special cases God makes His revelations through dreams; for example, the cases of Jacob, Joseph and Nebuchadnezzar. Solomon's dream was perhaps suggested by his father's exhortations (See Proverbs 4:3-7) and his own impressions at this great gathering. For the first time in his reign he saw a national assembly, the great convocation of Israel. What a mighty people! What vast and varied interests! How complicated the problems of administration! How great the responsibility on him! He seemed to be appalled at the situation, and was asking himself how he, a boy, could meet it. Thinking thus he fell asleep, and in his sleep came this dream:

"In Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night: and God said, Ask what I shall give thee. And Solomon said (and I do wish we could always have him as presented here), Thou hast showed unto thy servant David my father great kindness, according as he walked before thee in truth, and in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with thee; and thou hast kept for him this great kindness, that thou hast given him a son to sit on his throne, as it is this day. And now, O Jehovah my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of David my father: and I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in. And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. Give thy servant therefore an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and evil; for who is able to judge this thy great people?"

It is impossible for any candid mind to read that without being impressed by it. Let me assure you that whoever, on the threshold of any great enterprise, is without the spirit of true humility, is certain to fail. One of the best forecasts of success is that he sees the magnitude and difficulty of the work and realizes his own personal insufficiency and his entire dependence upon the divine help. Would that all of us had that spirit all the time! There is this thing about it: Whenever you lose humility, and begin to say, "All these things have I done," then remember that "Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall." The feet of pride are sure to slip in due time. Take the lesson to heart.

I can't conceive of anything more noble than Solomon's sense of responsibility and humility before God. A boy made king, king of the elect nation, king of so great a people; in other words, the destiny of the whole world is involved in the mighty religious influences to go out from him and his people. Well might he say, "Lord, I am a little child. I don't know how to go out and come in. Give me wisdom." The saying pleased the Lord. I suggest a sermon: "Ask what I shall give thee."

One Christmas when we had services in the old church at Waco and I preached the sermon, I took that text: "Ask

what I shall give thee," and I told them that every family represented in the congregation had either propounded or heard that question in connection with the day. The parent had said, "What shall I give thee, my son?" and all the young people had pondered the question: "I am to choose my gift and I have a large margin; what will I take?" My own little boy would say, "Give me an automobile." "Ask what I shall give thee." What a wonderful thing it is that God permits to us the statement of the desires of our hearts. Even if we keep on praying for an evil thing, in His anger He will sometimes give us what we ask.

God's answer not only gives Solomon what he asks for, but a number of other things—honor and riches—things that he did not ask for. He gave him wisdom, the capacity to rule this great people. Our record says, "I give thee a wise and understanding heart, so that there hath been none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee." In this connection consider chapter 4:29-34:

"And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea-shore. And Solomon's wisdom exceeded the wisdom of all the children of the east, and all the wisdom of Egypt. For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan, the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Calcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol; and his fame was in all the nations round about. And he spake three thousand proverbs; and his songs were a thousand and five. And he spake of trees, from the cedar that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of birds, and of creeping things, and of fishes. And there came of all peoples to hear the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, who had heard of his wisdom."

Of that remarkable wisdom we speak particularly in the next chapter. An exemplification of his wisdom marks the beginning of his reign, which is here given. There came up a case to which there were no witnesses beyond the contestants themselves. Two mothers living together in the same house had children born to them, and one of the children dies. Then both mothers claim the living child. Nobody

knows anything about the circumstances except the two women, and they come before the king to decide the contention. The first one claimed that it was her child. She says, "This other woman lost her baby; it died and while I was asleep she came and took my baby and put her dead baby in my baby's place, and after awhile when I waked up I looked intently at this baby in my arms, and found it was dead, but it was not my baby." Now a mother is certainly able to know her child. "I looked intently at it. It was not my baby and I looked over there and I saw this other woman had my baby." The other woman contended: "I say her baby died and I am the mother of this live child." Under the law everything must be confirmed by two or three witnesses, but here there is no evidence except the two parties in court. How will the young king handle the matter? He says, "Bring me a sword." The sword is brought. "Cut that baby into halves and give each woman a half"—not that he intended to kill the baby; he was only trying to get evidence. As soon as he said that both women speak. One of them said, "No! No! don't kill the baby. I had rather give it up to the other woman." The other woman said, "Yes, kill it and let each one of us have a part." This gave Solomon his evidence. He knew what to decide. He says, "Give this baby to the woman who prefers to lose it rather than see it die. She is the mother." The decision naturally attracted great attention, and the report of it spread Solomon's fame far and wide.

### QUESTIONS

1. What the first scripture used to introduce this lesson?
2. Rehearse the items of the kingdom charter given in this scripture.
3. What the second scripture, and its import?
4. What the third scripture? Describe the kingdom according to this Psalm. Who fulfilled this primarily? Who more largely fulfills it?
5. In what did the establishment of Solomon on the throne consist, who was his first enemy, and how was he disposed of?

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6. Where do we find the law of the sanctuary? Did Solomon violate it in having Joab put to death while holding on to the horns of the altar?

7. Who the second enemy, and how disposed of?

8. Who was appointed to fill Joab's office? Abiathar's?

9. Was the marriage of Solomon to the daughter of the king of Egypt a violation of the law not to inter-marry with the people round-about? What Psalm touching this marriage?

10. Describe Solomon as a puzzled worshipper.

11. What was God's proposition to Solomon, and Solomon's request? What the lesson for us? What God's answer to this request? Give an example of his wisdom as exercised.

## XXVII

### THE ANALYSIS OF SOLOMON'S WISDOM

*Scriptures:* I Kings 3:4-27; 4:29-34; 10:1-10

**T**HE scriptures that embody for us the account of the wisdom of Solomon are as follows: I Kings 3:4-27; 4:29-34; 10:1-10, the book of Proverbs, the book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon's Song, Matthew 12:42 and Psalm 127. Other Psalms are attributed to Solomon, but I think not rightly. Psalm 127 is unquestionably his.

The first passages cited give the narrative account, while Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, and Psalm 127 constitute Solomon's contribution to the Bible as embodiments of his wisdom, while Matthew 12:42 institutes a comparison with One wiser than Solomon.

Before discussing the wisdom of Solomon I call your attention to Old Testament approaches to it. The first approach to it is found in Exodus 31:3-6 and repeated again in Exodus 35 and 36. These plainly declare that the artificers who made the different parts—the artistic parts—of the tabernacle and its vessels derived the wisdom with which they wrought them from God. They received the inspiration of God to do those things exactly right. The next approach we find in the life of David, an account of three wise women, II Sam. 14:2 and 20:16. The first one was Abigail; the second was a wise woman from Tekoah, employed by Joab to convince David that he ought to recall Absalom; the third was a wise woman in a city in the Northern part of Palestine who, through her wisdom, saved the city from destruction by having the head of the rebel



that had fled to them thrown over the wall to Joab. A fourth approach is found in the book of Chronicles (I Chron. 12:32) where reference is made to the men of Issachar that were wise and had understanding of the signs of the times and knew what Israel ought to do.

I now analyze for you the wisdom of Solomon. Our first inquiry is concerning its origin. On the divine side it is expressly stated that it is the gift of God (I Kings 3, commencing with the 5th verse), but preliminary to the divine origin certain human factors explain how Solomon was prepared to make the extraordinary request for wisdom. He was only a boy. How did it ever occur to him to ask for such a gift as that instead of some other things?

That leads us to consider the human element in the origin. If you read in the book of Proverbs commencing at 7:3 you see David's *instruction* to him to get wisdom, to get understanding, as more precious than rubies and gold or anything else in the world. All those chapters cited, from the fourth to the seventh inclusive, give us David's instructions and exhortations to his son. They tell us who put it into his mind to prize wisdom above all earthly things. What a glorious thing it is to have the right kind of a father! By reading Psalm 72 you get at another factor of the human origin. There his father is *praying* that his son may have the kind of wisdom to rule the people, and rule righteously. A little child whose father is continually speaking about the right kind of wisdom, and continually praying that his child may have it, will likely himself pray for it. David's prayer and instructions are very touching. They account for the son's wise response to God's saying, "Ask what I shall give thee."

Another human factor appears in the book of Proverbs, the influence of his mother, Bathsheba, not only a beautiful woman but a really good woman, and a very wise woman. Solomon himself tells how his mother intervenes: "The

words of King Lemuel, the oracle that his mother taught him." Lemuel is another name for Solomon.

"What, my son? and what, O son of my womb?  
And what, O son of my vows? Give not thy strength unto women,  
Nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings.  
It is not for kings, O Lemuel, it is not for kings to drink wine;  
Nor for princes to say, Where is strong drink?  
Lest they drink, and forget the law,  
And pervert the justice due to any that is afflicted.  
Give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish,  
And wine unto the bitter in soul,  
But rulers should not drink."

Then follows her matchless ideal of a true wife—one of the brightest gems of literature. Early parental training from both father and mother prepares the boy to ask for the best things. The book of Proverbs shows how well he understood the counsels of both parents, but his later life shows particularly his disastrous departure from his mother's oracle. In other words, Solomon knew more wisdom than he practiced. His were not sins of ignorance. But when we inquire what prepared the parents to prepare the child, we go back again, as we always must, to God himself verifying the saying of James, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." This is manifest when we note that God's promise to give David such a son (See II Sam. 7:12-16) occasions David's prayer and instructions (See II Sam. 7:18-29 and Psalms 72) and also quickened his mother's interest (See I Chron. 29:9 and I Kings 1:28-29).

The origin of the wisdom of Solomon, therefore, stands thus: (1) God's promise and oath; (2) Parental instruction, counsel and prayer preparing the child to appreciate and ask for the best things; (3) God's calling out Solomon's choice; (4) Solomon's choice and request; (5) God's gift of the thing asked for.

Second question: What that wisdom? Only foolish

people think that wisdom and knowledge mean the same thing. You may know a great deal and be the biggest fool going. I have known people whose minds were like great lumber rooms full of odds and ends of all kinds of things, and yet they were not wise enough to make practical use of the miscellaneous material. Wisdom is the application of knowledge. "Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers." The elements of Solomon's wisdom were as follows:

First, an understanding heart to discern justice and to judge righteously and rule righteously. His wisdom was given to him to enable him to fill his position as king of a great people. That is how he defined it: "Give me an understanding heart to discern judgment and to rule rightly over this so great people."

The second element was the regulation of passions and life. The book of Proverbs continually discriminates between the wise one and the simple one. A wise man, clearly discerning right things and applying right things, will not allow himself to be entrapped by seduction and temptation, but the simple one is led astray and a dart is thrust through his liver.

The next element of the wisdom was the right way of doing things. You may yourselves discriminate between wise and foolish pastors by comparing their methods of handling an affair. The most of the trouble that comes upon the churches comes by the unwise handling of delicate affairs. He may injudiciously gossip with his members about a delicate matter and so hopelessly stir up his church into hostile parties, or he may preach about it censoriously, or be hasty to commit himself on *exparte* evidence until he will no longer be able to moderate with impartiality. The other, by wise handling, will heal the breach. When a difficult case is presented to a wise man his first words are, "Let us see how we can get at the heart of this matter and deal with it wisely so as not to do harm but to do good." Up in New

England it is a proverb that the wise housekeeper is a woman of tact. She may not see the right any better than some other woman, but she does the right better; she gets at it more skillfully.

The fourth element was his power to interpret things. Like these men of Issachar, who could not only discern the signs of the times, but could put a proper construction upon the march of events and hence could tell what Israel ought to do. Our Savior rebuked the men of His day that while they could read the signs of the heavens, and tell when it was likely to be a fair or a cloudy day, they did not read the signs of the spiritual times, and allowed great calamities to come on them unprepared. This power to interpret applies to natural as well as spiritual things. It has been said that no man can interpret nature who does not love nature. But Solomon loved nature, and he could get at the secret of the plant on the wall, and the cedar of Lebanon, and the birds that fly and the flowers that bloom. Tradition says that the birds loved him so that the doves would form a canopy with outspread wings under which he could march from his house to the temple. You need not believe the legend, but it exhibits the people's idea of Solomon's power of interpreting the secrets of nature. It is said of Byron by Pollock that he laid his hand with the familiarity of a brother upon the ocean's mane, and made the mountains his brothers, and the thunders talked to him as a friend. He himself exhibits his power in the famous poem, "An Apostrophe to the Ocean"—a matchless poem of its kind which all of you would do well to memorize. It commences thus:

"There is a pleasure in the pathless woods."

The fifth element in his wisdom was largeness of heart, or broad-mindedness. The scripture statement is that he had largeness of heart as the sands of the seashore. Sam

Jones used to say, "No man can be broad-minded who has 'possum eyes'—so close together that you can punch out both of them at once with an old-fashioned two-tined table fork." Some men are so narrow that they cannot even conceive of a big, broad subject. But Solomon had largeness of heart.

The next element of his wisdom was philosophy. The book of Ecclesiastes embodies it. He there seeks to ascertain the chief good and the chief end of man. What is that good thing that a man should do all the days of his life? Philosophy inquires into the reason of things, for the philosophy of a thing is the reason of a thing. You have already found out that I have little respect for uninspired philosophy. We might profitably omit the course from college curriculums. It is all sheer speculation from Thales to Epicurus and Zeno; from Aristotle to Kant; from Kant to the pragmatism of Prof. James of Harvard.

*As William Ashmore in his review of Prof. James, well says, "Lewes acted as a sexton in burying all the philosophies up to his time, and his successors have buried him." Their speculations after all are but "airy nothings," as varied as the shifting scenes in a kaleidoscope, and all as transitory as rainbows vanishing in the storm. Each successor does only one good thing—he brushes out the trail of his predecessor.*

Even Solomon goes a long and costly way in Ecclesiastes, to get at a conclusion obvious to a child's faith. Carefully observe that wisdom should be invoked in order to do the right things in the right way in dealing with our fellowmen and our God; to lead us in the paths of judgment, mercy and truth.

The next point in the analysis is to locate the very beginning of real wisdom in the human heart, and here you find Solomon's conclusion in Ecclesiastes in direct harmony with Job 28. That whole chapter is devoted to this question: "Where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of



understanding?" and concludes by saying, "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil, understanding." When we come to the New Testament we find that James says, "If any man lack wisdom let him ask of God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not, but let him ask in faith, nothing doubting. An unstable man wavering in all his ways, his prayers will not be answered."

The next element in the analysis is the antecedent characteristics of a seeker of wisdom. First, humility. Solomon says, "I am a little child;" a knowledge of his need, "I don't know how to go out or to come in;" and next, prayer for it.

Our next item in the analysis of Solomon's wisdom answers this question: How was that wisdom of his expressed? And the answer is, It is expressed, first, in deed, as when he made the decision about the baby and the two women claiming it; the second when he answered all the hard questions that the Queen of Sheba put to him and, by the way, he is the only man known to history who answered fairly all the questions put to him by a woman. It is also expressed in the books he wrote, treating upon the subject: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, and one Psalm. In these books he embodies it in proverbs, pithy sayings and parables, contrasting one thing with another, a comparison obtained by putting two things parallel, which is the meaning of parable originally.

The next point in the analysis is the fame of his wisdom, or the impression that it made upon his own time and succeeding generations. According to a statement made in I Kings 4:34, Solomon's fame went to all the kings of the earth. They all heard about him. The Queen of Sheba heard a rumor of him. It was carried on every ship, carried over every desert on every camel, carried by every traveler, "Over yonder at Jerusalem in the Holy Land is the wisest man the world ever knew. He can solve any perplexity; he can answer the hardest questions. He can



deliver the most righteous judgments. He can discern the very heart of a thing and lay it open." The fame of his wisdom is evidenced by imitations in later days and by the increment of extravagant legends. The apocryphal books of "Wisdom" and "Ecclesiasticus" are imitations, centuries later; the first is an imitation of Proverbs, the second of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes and Solomon's Song. The so-called "Psalter of Solomon," consisting of eighteen Psalms and found in the Septuagint, is another example of imitation. Indeed, a school of wisdom literature followed. The extravagant legends of his exorcism of demons and genii, his magical powers vested in incantations, seals, amulets, charms and inscriptions, may be gathered from Josephus, the Koran, "The Arabian Nights," and a world of Oriental literature. The Jews have a legend that when Alexander came to Jerusalem and learned about the wisdom of Solomon, he took back with him a copy of Solomon's books and furnished them to Aristotle, and that he derived a large part of his philosophy from Solomon's philosophy.

In this connection may be asked the date of the book of Job. Stanley, after a comparison of its style, thought, and turns of expression, with Solomon's book, makes it a product of Solomon's times. His argument is very inconclusive. On the other hand, Dr. Thirtle, in his "Old Testament Problems" takes the position that it was composed to pacify and instruct Hezekiah in his afflictions. His argument is much more plausible than Stanley's, but the argument for the Mosaic authorship and time is much stronger than either. The book of Job is older, profounder and more archaic than Ecclesiastes, Proverbs, or than Psalm 73 attributed to Asaph. Its correspondences with the Pentateuch are more numerous and more striking than can be traced in any literature of the days of David, Solomon or Hezekiah. Moses, exiled for forty years in Midian, touching Job's country, finds the opportunity arising from association with

the characters in Job. The unmerited suffering of his people in the Egyptian furnace, of which suffering he himself is an example, gives the clue to the book. The burning bush solves the problem, and after the lesson appropriately come Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy, increasing the light. The book of Job shows how men without the revelations of the Pentateuch attempt to solve the problem of the unmerited sufferings of the righteous. Its key passages cry out for a revelation. It is on this theory that the first book of the Bible was to be written, therefore I count Job the first book of the Bible. The last thought in connection with Solomon's wisdom is

*The Glorious Antitype.*—I must speak a little about Him. In Matt. 12:42, Jesus says, "The Queen of the South shall rise up in the judgment with this generation and shall condemn it, for she came from the end of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold a greater Solomon is here." In other words, in the New Testament is Wisdom. Paul says so, using the feminine form, Sophia, that is, the wisdom and power of God. John says so in using the masculine form Logos, or Reason.

The Pharisees asked this question: "Whence hath this man wisdom?" They wanted to get at the origin of Christ's wisdom, seeing that He hath never learned. Whence his power to silence every gainsayer and to give answers to perplexities that startle the world today? Whence His wisdom? In Isaiah 11 is the prophecy concerning the origin of the wisdom of the great antitype of Solomon, the Prince of Peace:

"And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit. And the Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah. And His delight shall be in the fear of Jehovah; and He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither decide after the hearing of His ears; but with righteousness shall He judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the

earth; and He shall smite the earth with the rod of His mouth; and with the breath of His lips shall He slay the wicked. And righteousness shall be the girdle of His loins, and faithfulness the girdle of His reins."

There is the seven-fold wisdom, meaning the perfection of wisdom. That wisdom was conferred upon Christ without measure, and He, too, prayed for it as He came up out of baptism, for the Spirit descended upon Him in the form of a dove, and ever afterwards every thought of His life, every step of His life, was in exact accord with the promptings of the Spirit of God that came upon Him without measure. He spoke in parables, putting things alongside of each other, and He spoke in proverbs and epigrams, and the sayings of Jesus rule the world today. He rules in exact righteousness, rich and poor alike.

The Jewish idea of wisdom far surpassed the Greek idea of it. Theirs was unaided human philosophy, and purely speculative. For example, Lucretius, in "The Nature of Things," or the Epicurean philosophy at its fountain head, enunciates the essential features of modern evolution. See how the Stoics accounted for the origin of things and the government of the world! Their Fate, and the Chance of the Epicureans, are against God's Providence. See how their wisdom had no practical effect on morals. Their wise men oftentimes were the vilest men, and in the highest attainments of their philosophies their cities rotted and became putrid in the sight of God. Not so with the wisdom that God gives. In the same way Gnosticism, a subjective infallible knowledge for the few, bred a varied progeny of asceticism, license and antinomianism. Christ, then, is the great antitype of Solomon.

## QUESTIONS

1. What scriptures give an account of the wisdom of Solomon?
2. As to its origin: (1) What the human element? (2) What the divine element? (3) What the summary of the origin?

3. As to its meaning and content: (1) Define wisdom as compared with knowledge, and tell who wrote "Knowledge comes but Wisdom lingers." (2) Give the elements of his wisdom. (3) Show wherein is the superiority of the Hebrew wisdom over "the Sophia" of the Greeks.

4. How does Solomon go a long way to find his simple conclusion concerning the very beginning of wisdom?

5. What chapter of Job is devoted to the same inquiry and reaches a similar conclusion?

6. How does James, our Lord's brother, tell us to get wisdom?

7. What the antecedent characteristics of a seeker of wisdom?

8. How was Solomon's wisdom expressed?

9. What the fame of his wisdom: (1) As stated in this chapter? (2) As expressed in imitations? (3) As expressed in legends?

10. Cite an illustrious example of one brought to Solomon by the fame of his wisdom.

11. What the effect on her of witnessing his wisdom?

12. What modern son perpetuates her saying?

13. Outline a sermon on our Lord's reference to her in Matt. 12:42.

14. Who the glorious Antitype of Solomon?

15. What Greek word does Paul use in describing Him?

16. What Greek word does John employ to the same end?

17. What was the puzzle to the Pharisees concerning Him?

18. Quote the words of Isaiah answering their question.

19. What the great contrast on practical lines between Christ's wisdom and the wisdom of Solomon?

20. Define Gnosticism and Agnosticism and contract Christ's wisdom with both.

21. Explain Solomon's sacrifices at Gibeon instead of Jerusalem.

## XXVIII

### THE WORKS OF SOLOMON

*Scriptures*: References in Harmony, pp. 168-178

**T**HE works of Solomon were mainly buildings, whether of houses, or cisterns, etc., constructed during his reign and under his supervision. The first and most famous was the temple. The second was his own house. The third was his wife's house. The fourth was the upbuilding of the walls of Jerusalem and its fortifications, strengthening particularly the famous citadel of Millo. Fifth, he built two kinds of cities, and quite a number of each kind. One kind was for the headquarters and protection of his commerce; another kind was fortified cities controlling all the passes from any direction into his land. Among the fortified cities note the following:

First, Lebanon. He erected a strong fortification in the northern part of his country in the mountains of Lebanon on the great highway of Damascus, to guard the immense trade that poured through that city from the fords of the Euphrates.

Next, Hazor, still further North near Lake Merom. The object of that city was to protect the entrance from the South of Syria into his country. You should know the topography of the country in order to fully understand the wisdom of the location of each fortified city.

The next was at Megiddon on the plain of Esdraelon, which was the great battle plain of the Holy Land. It was so in ancient times. It was so in mediæval times, and according to prophecy will be so near the end of time.

This fortification controlled all the Esdraelon plain. It was in the western part of the Holy Land, about the middle of it not far from the Mediterranean Sea.

The next was the great pass of Beth-horon, where Joshua fought his decisive battle. That is the pass leading from the Philistine country to Jerusalem. He fortified both ends of that pass, upper and nether, so that from the Plains of the Philistines an army could not approach Jerusalem in that direction.

Then on the South there were Gezer and Baalath, two other fortified places that protected not only from the Philistine raids, but the Egyptian raids on the southwest. His other fenced cities—and I will not mention all of them—protected the borders on the east of the Jordan, so that when these fortifications were completed Solomon's country was like Paris before the war with Germany, and even since, *i. e.*, from every direction there were long lines of fortifications.

The other class of cities was mainly on account of trade. You should have a map before you. East or northeast of Damascus, and south of his border on the Euphrates, was a desert, and in that desert a cluster of the most famous springs or fountains in the world—perennial water in abundance and beautiful groves of palm trees—and there Solomon built a city, Tadmor, which stood a thousand years, and in later history is called Palmyra, where Zenobia, the Queen of the East, reigned. If you are familiar with Roman history, you will remember her capture at her capital Palmyra, and her being brought a prisoner to Rome, and there settling down as a quiet Roman matron, marrying a member of the Roman nobility. In history the city of Palmyra is famous. In our times it is famous for archæology. To the ruins of Palmyra, Baalbek and Thebes on the Nile, and similar places, scholars go to excavate and give us the result of their studies in archæology.



Solomon built quite a city, not for land commerce, but for sea commerce, at the head of the Gulf of Akaba, and transported a large population there in order that it should be held by loyal Jews, as that was his only good seaport. Those on the Mediterranean coast that lay within the boundary of his country—Joppa, for example—were very poor seaports.

The next great buildings in connection with his reign were the store houses, immense structures on all the lines of traffic leading to Jerusalem where the revenues of the king were collected. Then the great stables that he erected for the housing of his chariot horses and cavalry horses.

Another great work of Solomon was the building of roads. Our city papers say much about the split-log drag and the necessity for good wagon roads, roads for foot passengers and horsemen, for bringing the country products to the city markets. Solomon's system of roads became as famous as the roads described by Prescott in the history of Peru, which are ahead of any in history except the Roman roads.

A very difficult work of Solomon was the building of a navy of his own. When he traded in the Mediterranean he had to use the ships of Tyre, just as a great part of our trade now is carried on in English or German bottoms. That is not as helpful to a country as to have its own merchant marine, its own ships for carriage. A tremendous change in Solomon's kingdom was brought about by the establishment of this navy of his at Ezion-geber at the head of the Gulf of Akaba, which is a part of the Red Sea. Those ships were manned largely by Tyrians, as the Jews were not good sailors, and that fleet would set sail with imposing ceremony, to be gone three years. That is a very considerable voyage. The fleet would sail down the Indian Ocean to the East Indies, Borneo, Sumatra, and other islands of the archipelago in the Indian Ocean, and then on

to the archipelagos in the Pacific Ocean, and all down the Eastern coast of Africa.

Before Solomon's time Africa had been circumnavigated. Fleets, starting in the Red Sea, had gone clear around the Cape of Good Hope in South Africa, and back into the Mediterranean through the Straits of Gibraltar. They seemed to have forgotten about this when, not long before the time of Columbus, Vasco De Gama circumnavigated Africa, but it had been done before Solomon's time. That fleet would bring him back spices, jewels, gold and silver, and it mentions in your text here peacocks among other things, with the hundred eyes of Argus in their tails, according to Greek legend. You remember that Juno appointed Argus, because he had a hundred eyes, to watch Jupiter and see that he did not stay out at night, and Jupiter employed Mercury to play on his flute, and by its music to put Argus to sleep, and while asleep to kill him; and then Jupiter had his own sweet will without espionage. But Juno put the eyes of Argus in the peacock's tail, and indeed if his eyes could serve no better purpose while in his head, they might as well be in a bird's tail.

In Hurlbut's "Bible Atlas" is a detailed description of Solomon's most famous building—the temple of the Lord. You must not expect from me an elaborate description of the temple. I submit, rather, some salient points.

I. *The Plan and Specifications.*—These were all given to David by inspiration of God. The Temple proper was but an enlargement of the house built by Moses, with relative proportions preserved throughout. The plan of the house built by Moses was also inspired. This we studied in Exodus.

II. *The Date.*—On page 170 of your book this statement is made: "And it came to pass in the 480th year after the children of Israel were come out of the land of Egypt, in

the fourth year of Solomon's reign over Israel, in the month of Ziv, which is the second month, that he began to build the house of the Lord," and on the second day of that second month, as you see from the corresponding passage in Chronicles, this temple was commenced. This specific date, so circumstantially given, has puzzled many commentators. They don't know how to fit the events of Moses, Joshua, Judges, Samuel and David into just 480 years. It is the governing passage that largely influenced Archbishop Usher in arranging the chronology as you see it at the head of your King James Bible.

Turn now to page 173: "In the fourth year was the foundation of the house of the Lord laid, in the month of Ziv. And in the eleventh year, in the month Bul, which is the eighth month, was the house finished throughout all the parts thereof, and according to all the fashion of it. So was he seven years in building it." Not only the building itself, but all its furniture, the utensils and implements of every kind put in the temple and used in its worship, was a work of seven years.

The next salient point worthy of your attention is the message of the Lord to Solomon when he was about to commence this work. You find it on page 170 at the bottom: "And the word of the Lord came to Solomon, saying, Concerning this house which thou art building, if thou wilt walk in my statutes and execute my judgments, and keep all of my commandments to walk in them; then will I perform my word with thee, which I spake unto David, thy father. And I will dwell among the children of Israel and will not forsake my people Israel." This is what He says to Solomon, "You have commenced to build a house for me. I come to tell you that I am with you, and give you my promise at the start that it shall be God's dwelling-place." When we come to the next visit the Lord makes to Solomon, when the house was dedicated, I will

give you another remarkable passage, but this one is at the commencement of the work.

The next thing we note is the site. The first intimation of the site is given to us in Abraham's time. Abraham was commanded to take his son Isaac and offer him up as a burnt offering upon Mount Moriah, then held by the Jebusites; and on that mountain and at the very place where the temple was subsequently erected, there the symbolic forecast of the offering up of a greater Isaac took place. The next account that we have of the site is when the great plague came upon the people of Jerusalem, and David to avert the plague presented himself before God, and offered to die for his people, to let the punishment come upon him and spare the people. When he saw the angel of death approaching Jerusalem, he boldly went forth to meet the angel, and proposed a substitutionary sacrifice of himself; and then the plague was stayed, and at the place where the plague was stayed, David bought the threshing-floor of Araunah, the Jebusite, and marked it out as the site where God's house was to be erected, where the great sacrifices were to be offered throughout the ages, that were to foretell the coming of the greatest Sacrifice.

Next in importance is the great work of preparing the foundation. You must conceive of an irregularly shaped mountain whose crest was taken off low enough down the mountain to give sufficient area. If on three sides the mountain sloped down into the valley, a wall must be built on those three sides high enough for the desired level, and the crest taken off must be used to fill in all the space to a level with the wall summit. On one side there would be no wall. The area of the space thus leveled was about thirty acres in the shape of a trapezoid, one side of which was 1,520 feet; the opposite side 1,611 feet; one end 1,017 feet, and the other end 921 feet. Of course, the height of the

wall would vary on the three sides, according to the dip of the slope into the valley below. The greatest height of the wall was 143 feet. This perpendicular wall, built of immense stones bevelled into each other without cement, would render the temple area unapproachable and impregnable on three sides. The fourth side was safe-guarded by an immense moat, and by the fortified tower of Millo. The crest of the mountain taken off was not sufficient in bulk to fill in on the three sides up to the top of the wall, and then to furnish stones for the buildings and terraces. So Solomon opened quarries on the other mountain sides, tunneling under the city itself. There today may be seen Solomon's subterranean quarries, where slaves toiled in the heart of the earth. Their bones are yet where they died, and the marks of their implements on the everlasting rock, and some of the mammoth unused stones. These slaves were the unassimilated Canaanites, fed and clothed indeed after a fashion, but without wages. So also the multitude of laborers who were sent to Tyre under overseers to get out the forest timbers, were conscript laborers, thousands of them, working in reliefs under taskmasters.

But Solomon had nobody in his kingdom skillful enough to direct the stone work and establish foundries for the materials of brass, silver and gold. So he appealed to Hiram, king of Tyre, for an expert superintendent. The king of Tyre sent him the son of a widow, also called Hiram. If you ever get to be a Mason, you will hear more about Hiram Abiff. He was the architect of the whole business, and had the full superintendence of everything. Your text here gives an account of him, and of what he did in constructing the Temple.

An equally stupendous work in the way of preparation had to be done, namely, to provide an adequate water supply. To this end, he built enormous cisterns capable of holding many millions of barrels of water, and aqueducts



for carrying the water. He built pools, like the Pool of Siloam, and vast reservoirs.

You must not conceive of the 35 acres as one level, but several terraced levels, one terrace rising above another until on the highest level is the temple proper and its immediate approaches. The lowest level was the court of the Gentiles, a higher level the court of the women. The whole area with its inner divisions corresponds in general plan to the enclosed area around the tabernacle of Moses and the tent itself. The temple proper, itself a small building, was only the tent of Moses on a larger scale, all relative proportions preserved.

The lumber material was more difficult to procure than the stone material. It came from the forests of Lebanon—cedar and fir. The getting out of the timber from the forest, and the floating of it in great rafts from Tyre to Joppa, was performed by Hiram's men. Solomon furnished the rations and compensated for the labor by giving King Hiram ten cities. When Hiram came to inspect the cities, he found them to be only sites for cities, something like Charles Dickens' description of American cities, which existed only in sanguine prospect, or like the Bible description of Jerusalem in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah: "Now the city was exceedingly large, only the houses were not yet built, and the inhabitants thereof were few." Hiram, in disgust, refused to receive them, and Solomon built them and peopled them with Jews. It has always seemed, on the face of it, that Solomon played an unworthy Yankee trick on his confiding and generous ally. Solomon's own men had to transport this lumber material all the way up hill from Joppa to Jerusalem, and there, under the skilled supervision of Hiram, the widow's son, they were fashioned for their place in the temple. Indeed, every part, whether of stone, timber or metal, was so skillfully fashioned that the temple went up without the sound of axe, saw or ham-



mer. So the spiritual temple arises in silence rather than noise. The kingdom of Heaven comes not with observation. "Sanctified rows," as in many modern meetings, and confusions of mingled services, as at Corinth, are not contributory to the edifying of the temple of Christ.

There are some very striking references to the works of Solomon in the books of Ecclesiastes and the Song. For instance, this passage from Ecclesiastes 2—Solomon himself talking: "I made me great works, I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards; I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kinds of fruits; I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees."

The gardens or paradises built by Solomon, the principal ones, were these: One near Jerusalem, where tremendous work in the rock had to be made to get space—terrace space—for his garden. Another was built about seven miles south of Jerusalem, near Bethlehem; and his summer park was at Mount Lebanon, described in the Song of Solomon, and when the hot summertime would come, and he would start to that summer resort in the mountains, a palanquin, or traveling carriage was made, and what a gorgeous thing it was! As it was a mountainous country, a palanquin was used and carried on the shoulders of men, but not until he got to a point where a chariot could not be used; up to that point he went in a beautiful chariot, the finest ever known, drawn by the finest of horses, as that Song tells you: "Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all the powders of the merchant?"

The era of all these famous works was one of peace. These are not the achievements of unsettled times. War is destructive, not constructive. Solomon was not a man of blood, but the prince of peace; and hence the type of Him at whose triumph all wars cease for ever.

## QUESTIONS

1. What the principal building works of Solomon in Jerusalem?
2. What two kinds of cities elsewhere?
3. Cite the more important fortified cities and the purpose of each.
4. Locate and describe the trade city of Tadmor, and give something of its subsequent history.
5. What city for sea trade, and how peopled?
6. Why was he dependent upon the Phœnician cities of Tyre and Sidon for Mediterranean trade?
7. Locate and give the reason for building Ezion-geber, and describe the commerce promoted by it. Tell about his fleet there, how manned and why, the time length of its voyages, the countries visited, and the products imported.
8. Was Africa circumnavigated before the famous voyages around it by Vasco De Gama? How was it done?
9. Where, probably, the Ophir of the ancients? Where Tarshish?
10. What did Solomon in the way of roads, and what other countries since his time were noted for the building of good roads?
11. What attention is given to this matter by our country now?
12. How were the plans and specifications of the temple obtained, and through whom?
13. What previous plan on a smaller scale was followed, and how and through whom was it obtained?
14. Why was Jehovah so particular in insisting on exact conformity with every detail of His plan?
15. What the site of the temple, and the two great historical events leading to its selection, and their typical import?
16. Where may we find the details of the temple structure?
17. Give the date of its beginning, and time of its building?
18. Describe the foundation work, the area obtained, and its shape and side dimensions.
19. Whence the material for this foundation work, the laborers, and the modern evidence of their labor?
20. How many levels on this area, and the purpose of each?
21. Whence and what the materials of wood, how gotten out and transported, who the laborers, how many, and how supplied with food?
22. Who was the human architect?
23. Besides food supplies, how did Solomon compensate Hiram, king of Tyre, for his help, what Hiram's opinion of the bargain, and what became of the rejected compensation?
24. What evidence of the perfect preparation of every piece of material before it was put into the building, and what the typical import?
25. What became of Solomon's temple, and whose succeeded it? What its fortunes, and who restored it on a grand scale near the time of our Lord, and what became of it? What building now occupies the ancient building site?
26. Of what was the tabernacle of Moses and Solomon's temple a type?

## XXIX

### DEDICATION OF THE TEMPLE

*Scriptures:* References in Harmony, pp. 178-192

**T**HIS discussion begins on page 178 of the Harmony, and relates to the dedication of the temple. We have already shown that the building of the temple was the greatest work of Solomon; that it made the greatest impression upon the world's mind of any structure that had ever been erected in human history. The importance of the temple was to insure a central place of worship, or of sacrifice, rather. The object of it was to bring about unity of faith, and national unity among the people. The idea comes from the following legislation by Moses: "When you shall obtain possession of the land and have become established, then you shall have one place in which to appear before the Lord." In brief, the purposes of the temple were these:

1. To provide a fixed habitation for Jehovah.
2. To provide a central place of worship where the tribes might assemble at the three great annual festivals and thus preserve the unity of the nation, Jehovah being the center of unity. In other words, as we explained on Leviticus, there must be: (a) A place to meet Jehovah on the throne of grace. (b) Sacrifices, or means of propitiation. (c) Priests, or Intermediaries between Jehovah and the people. (d) Times in which to approach Him, that is, with daily, weekly, monthly and annual offerings. (e) A Ritual, telling how to approach Him.

3. To prefigure the more glorious building, the church of

our Lord. A magnificent building, with an imposing ritual, and with fixed times of gathering the whole nation together, would bring about this unity of faith and unity of national life. The building having been completed, Solomon now proposes to publicly and formally dedicate it to the service of God. God had told him when he commenced the building that He would inhabit the house built for Him, and now Solomon proposes, by a very solemn national service, to consecrate this house to the Lord. I do not suppose that from any other one source, indeed from all other sources put together, that we get the idea of dedication-services so much as from this. The house could not be dedicated as soon as it was finished. It was several months from the time it was finished until it was dedicated. There had to be an appropriate time. It must be on the occasion of one of the great national feasts; so it was probably several months after the house was completed before the dedication services took place.

The first thing was to secure a great convocation of the people, and it is repeatedly stated that from Hamath on the north, or from the Euphrates River, unto the River of Egypt on the south, throughout the length and breadth of the land the princes, the rulers of the people, the representative men, were all commanded to be present. So it was a very great national convocation. The next step was to bring into this house all of the sacred things that survived from Moses' time, and including those that had been prepared by David. So with great ceremony the old tent that Moses built, the brazen altar of burnt offerings, the table for the shewbread and the golden candlestick, were all brought and put in this temple. Those of them no longer usable, for instance the tent, and a great many of the old-time utensils, were stored away and preserved as relics, including the brazen serpent Moses had made. We hear of that in a later reign and find out the last disposition of it. Then the Ark

itself was brought from the tent in which David had placed it, and it was put in its place in the Most Holy Place. It was necessary to make a new lid for it, or mercy seat. A long time had elapsed, nearly 500 years, since it was made, and when they opened it there was found in it nothing but the two tables of stone upon which God had inscribed the decalogue. From the Pentateuch we know that other things had been put there. For instance, Aaron's rod that budded, the pot of manna, and quite a number of things were put by the side of the Ark, but when they brought that Ark in that is all there was in it. Probably at the time it was captured by the Philistines some of these things were taken out.

The preliminary steps of the dedication were: (1) Placing in the treasury of the house all the things dedicated by David. (2) Placing all the sacred vessels and furniture in proper position. (3) The offering of multitudinous sacrifices. (4) The priests carrying into the Most Holy Place the Ark of the Covenant. (5) As the priest issues from the Most Holy Place, and the one hundred and twenty other priests standing east of the altar blow their trumpets, and the great Levite-choir bursts into a song of praise and thanksgiving, with cymbals and other instruments, saying, "For He is good; for His mercy endureth forever." (6) Then the cloud, symbol of divine presence and glory, filled all the house.

So it had been when Moses finished the tabernacle, and so it was at Pentecost, after the Lord had built His church, that the Holy Spirit came down in consecrating, attesting power.

Now, having all the sacred things in place, Solomon had a platform of brass erected, about seven feet square, for himself, a kind of pulpit, so that he would be sufficiently lifted up above the people to be seen as well as heard, and we now note a singular fact, viz.: that Solomon acted as both king and high priest, a royal priest, a priest on a



throne, and all through his life, he seems not only to perform the functions of the high priest, but he keeps the entire priesthood subject to his immediate control. Nothing is more evident in the study of his life than that the throne, in this case the civil power, kept the priesthood, the religious power, in subservience.

Solomon's posture in this dedication was standing at the introduction, standing when he goes to pronounce the benediction, but in offering prayer, he kneels, and that is the first place in the Bible where kneeling for prayer is mentioned. You read in the Bible about standing to pray and sitting to pray, and here we have kneeling to pray, showing that the posture is not essential to the act. One can pray lying down, but kneeling is very reverential, and congregations should observe one form.

Standing up before the people, his opening address reverts to the fact of God's promise to David that a son should succeed him, and that this son should build Him a house, and God's promise to live in the house when it was built. He then commences his prayer, and it is a very remarkable one. His first petition is that the Lord would accept and continually look toward this structure, really inhabit it and be present in it. The other elements of the petition are clearly set forth in the text here. Look on page 180 of the Harmony. First, the position with reference to the making of an oath where there is an issue between neighbors, and the difficulty cannot be settled by outside testimony, then all oaths shall be made before God. A man, as in the presence of God, shall solemnly swear that what he says is the correct version of the case. That is called an appeal to the judgment of God. It was a favorite method of settling matters throughout the middle ages. For instance, a nobleman might testify about a case, another challenge his testimony, and they would agree to refer it to the arbitrament of God, as decided in battle, and the two



knights would come out and fight in the presence of many witnesses with judges governing all the forms of it, and trusting to God that the right should triumph in that fight.

In *Ivanhoe*, you have an account of an appeal to the judgment of God in the fight between *Ivanhoe* and Sir Brian de Bois-Guilbert in order to settle a charge against the Jewess, Rebecca. She appealed to the trial by combat and said let God say if she was a witch, as they charged, and so the case was fought out. Hundreds of instances are noticed in history, romance and poetry of this appeal to God. Another method of appeal, mentioned also by Sir Walter Scott, is that when one was found to have died by violence, all of those whose circumstances made it possible that they might have participated in that murder were required to come up before the judge and with the murdered man's body shrouded in a white sheet, put their finger on the dead man and swear that they had nothing to do with that murder, and the legend taught that if the real murderer did come and put his hand on the man, then blood would flow out from the wound and thus convict him. Now Solomon prayed that in any case of issue between two neighbors, where there were no means of settling it by outside testimony, and they come before God, that God would decide the case so as to justify the innocent and condemn the guilty.

His second petition is with reference to defeat in battle. This people is a glorious people. War will doubtless arise, and they that go out may be defeated. If they be defeated, he says it will be on account of their sins, and, convicted of sin by public defeat, if they there on that battlefield turn toward the temple and pray God to forgive the sin, then Solomon asks that their national sin be forgiven.

He next considers the case of droughts. That whole country is subject to drought, and it is easy for all the sources of life to be dried up in severe drought. Drought in the Bible is represented as serving Jehovah; that it comes

from Him. Elijah prayed that it might not rain for three years and six months, and it didn't rain, and he prayed that it might rain, and it rained. Now he says, "when a time of drought comes on this land on account of sin, if this people pray toward this temple, asking God to open the windows of Heaven and send rain upon the land, then hear thou in Heaven and forgive the sin and send rain." You notice how he is connecting the temple with all the great vicissitudes of life.

Following that come famines and pestilences. Famines may result from wars, in destroying the products of the land, or they may result from plagues, as of locusts. Now, when a famine or a pestilence, or a contagious or epidemic disease, comes—and the whole country was subject to them, as we would have here in this country, if there should come the Asiatic cholera, or the yellow fever—then let the people pray, and his petition is that when these displays of divine wrath against the sins of men are made, that they will remember that there at Jerusalem in the temple is a throne of grace unto which any man may come boldly in time of need and ask divine interposition and pardon. We will find numerous examples of all these in the history as we go on.

He then takes the case of a stranger. This is a beautiful thought. Some stranger from a foreign country, not one of the chosen people of Israel, may be in exile, banished from his own land, no light from heaven, seemingly, by the selection of Israel barred from the commonwealth of God, yet if this stranger comes to that temple and lifts up his heart to God, then Solomon prays that the Lord will hear that stranger. That gets to be a very big item of the New Testament gospel. You remember Paul says to the Ephesians, "Ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God." In this prayer of Solomon is a forecast of the abrogation of the middle wall of partition between the Jew and the Gentile.

All peoples, all races, tribes, tongues and kindreds may come before the Lord. Paul enunciated it in Mars' Hill when he said, "God made of one blood all nations of men that inhabit the face of the earth, and appointed their seasons and their boundaries with a view that they might seek after Him and find Him." Now if a stranger comes to this house of God and honestly seeks a blessing from God, he may find it. That is a good thought. While our houses of worship are not temples, yet they ought to be places attractive to strangers. "Here the people of God are meeting and I am an outsider. Will I be welcome? Is there anything here for me? Will anyone speak a word of comfort or peace to my soul?"

When I was pastor of the First Church in Waco, two deacons had a special duty. Every Sunday morning, as soon as the bell tapped to call the Sunday School together for its final exercises, these two deacons arose and went down on the streets of Waco and spent the time till the opening song of the church service inviting strangers on the streets to come to church. One notable incident occurred. They brought a man in that way one day and he was converted. I think I never heard anything more touching than his relation of the fact that a very gentlemanly old man saw him on the street where he was wandering without money, no place to go, without a friend in the world, and asked him to come to church, which led to his salvation.

Solomon then takes up the case of battle. This is before the battle is joined. Is there such a thing as the decision of battle by the Almighty? Infidels adopt the theory of the French Marshal—that God favors the heaviest battalions in the fight. But the battle is not always to the strong. Patrick Henry insisted upon that in his speech before the House of Burgesses. Solomon wanted that thought fixed in the very hearts of his people, that before they fought they should pray. At the great battle of Agincourt, when a very

small English army was surrounded by an enormous French army, say 25,000 against 100,000, just before the fight the English army prayed and the French king says, "Are they prostrating themselves in homage to us already? Do they acknowledge their defeat?" One who knew them replied to the king, "No, sire. They are taking their case to their God, and they will fight the better for it when they get up off their knees." One of the soldiers, in the English civil war, remarked to Prince Rupert that he feared Cromwell's Ironsides when they knelt and prayed just before a fight and rose singing, "Let God arise and His enemies be scattered." In the book of the Maccabees there is a marvelous illustration of this, when Judas Maccabæus with 10,000 men defeated 100,000, having made a solemn appeal to the God of battles before the issue was joined.

It is related as an incident of colonial history that in the war between France and England, with the battlefield over in this country, that the French at a serious crisis dispatched a great fleet with 3,000 soldiers and 40,000 stands of arms to turn the scale, and as that armament approached this continent, the colonists felt that if it arrived safely they were lost, and so the preachers gathered the people for prayer that God might save them from this armament, and even as they prayed a storm came and scattered the fleet, wrecking many of the vessels, drowning most of the soldiers, and sinking most of their munitions of war.

The climax of Solomon's prayer anticipates a time when his people, on account of very grievous sin, shall be carried into captivity, their city taken, and over there in a land of exile they should become slaves of a foreign power. In this dire disaster, if they should repent and remember and look back toward Jerusalem and to this house, then might the Lord forgive them there and restore them to their land. We see Daniel carrying out this thought, as every day he would open his window and look toward Jerusalem and

pray, doing just what this prayer suggests. Against the royal edict he would turn toward the temple and pray. In Daniel 9 we find a famous prayer confessing the sins of the people and repeating the promise in the prophecy of Jeremiah that the seventy years of captivity is nearly out, and crying out, "Oh Lord, hear! Oh Lord, forgive," and even while he is praying an angel comes, touches him and tells him that his prayer is heard and shows him that not only will they be restored at that time, but unveils the prophecy concerning the restoration and rebuilding of Jerusalem and the length of time to elapse between that event and the birth of the long-looked for Messiah, as you will find in the conclusion of the ninth chapter.

Having offered this great prayer, Solomon arose and pronounced the benediction. As soon as this prayer ended, confirmation came in a very remarkable way. Fire came down from Heaven and burned up the sacrifices that had been placed upon the altar, and not only that, but God appears to Solomon as He had appeared to him at Gibeon, and uses this language, which Spurgeon makes the text of one of his greatest sermons: "And Jehovah said unto him, I have heard thy prayer and thy supplication, that thou hast made before me! I have hallowed this house, which thou hast built to put my name there forever." On the next page it says, "Now I have chosen and hallowed this house, that my name may be there forever; and mine eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually." In another place He says, "My hands shall be there." Now Spurgeon takes for a text: "My name shall be there, my eyes shall be there, my heart shall be there, my hands shall be there." "Whoever comes to that place of worship, I see him. Whoever prays, I hear him. Whoever pleads, I love him and I save him by my hand." Spurgeon makes a great sermon out of it, and I suggest it as a good text.

We note the permanent use of the temple: "Then Solo-



mon offered burnt offerings unto the Lord on the altar of the Lord which he had built before the porch even as the duty of every day required." That is the daily sacrifice, offering according to the commandment of Moses on the Sabbaths, then there are the weekly sacrifices, and on the new moons, which are the monthly sacrifices; and then on the great feast days three times in the year. There you have the whole cycle of the sacrifices to be offered in the temple. Moses provided for morning and evening sacrifices in the tabernacle. Perhaps you have read "The Prince of the House of David" by Ingraham, an Episcopalian preacher. He represents the young Jewish lady that came from Alexandria on a visit to Jerusalem as being waked up just as the dawn flushed the eastern sky; the silver trumpets began to blow, and as those trumpets were blown everybody rushed to the housetops, and while they were looking at the temple a great white cloud of incense rose up over the temple and ascended to heaven, representing the morning prayers of the people, and they on the housetops prostrated themselves at the time of the incense and offered their morning prayers. That occurred every evening also, and it could be seen by everybody in the city, the going up of that great cloud of incense. They could hear the sound of those trumpets calling to prayer morning and evening. Solomon provided according to the ritual of Moses and David that these daily sacrifices should never be neglected in that Temple, nor the sabbatical, or weekly, nor the monthly, nor the annual sacrifices in the times of the great feasts.

I will devote the rest of the chapter to the glory of Solomon. You will note these words: "And the King made silver and gold to be in Jerusalem as stones, and cedars made he to be as the sycamore trees that are in the lowland for abundance. So King Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom. And all the earth sought the presence of Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had



put in his heart, and they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and raiment, and armor, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year." Again, "And Solomon ruled over all the kingdoms from the river unto the land of the Philistines, and unto the border of Egypt: they brought him presents, and served Solomon all the days of his life. For he had dominion over all the region on this side the river, from Tiphseh even to Gaza, over all the kings on this side the river: and he had peace on all sides round about him. Judah and Israel were many, as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking, and every man under his vine and under his fig tree, from Dan even to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon."

As a sample of the glory of Solomon, we have the visit of the Queen of Sheba, who came, as our Lord said, from the uttermost parts of the earth. Commentators are divided as to whether she was a queen over that best watered and most fertile part of southern Arabia, or whether she was the Queen of Abyssinia just across the dividing water in Africa. Most modern commentators make her the queen of what is called "Arabia Felix," but my own judgment is that she was the queen of Abyssinia. The tradition of her reign lingers there where recently King Menelik defeated the Italian armies, and where they still keep up certain forms of the Christian religion, whence also in New Testament times came the Ethiopian eunuch whom Philip led to Christ. By combining I Kings 10: 1-13 with Matt. 12: 42 you may make a great sermon with these heads: (1) She heard a rumor that there was a wise man who could answer any question. (2) She had hard questions knocking at the door of her heart, as every woman has. She determined, at any cost, to have these problems solved, so she makes this great journey, and when she gets there and he answers all of her questions and she sees his glory, his temple, the way by which he went up into the temple, the apparel of his serv-

ants, there was no more breath in her, that is, she fainted. You know some people are so finely strung that they will faint when looking at a great picture, or on being stirred by great music. From her words, "The half was not told me," we get our hymn, "The half has never yet been told."

My own sermon on Matthew 12:42 had these heads: (1) There shall be a resurrection of the dead. (2) It will be a general resurrection, (3) followed by a general judgment, (4) whose determining principle shall be: Men are judged according to their light.

We may close this discussion with a brief account of Solomon's relations with other governments.

1. *Phœnicia*. He inherited from his father a most valuable alliance with Hiram, king of Tyre, whose fleets controlled the Mediterranean Sea.

2. *Egypt*. His marriage with Pharaoh's daughter held the friendship of the ruling dynasty in Egypt.

3. Friendly alliance with the Queen of Sheba.

4. In David's time the Hittite nation at Hamath paid tribute. Solomon conquered the country.

5. By intermarriage he secured friendly relations with many countries, as most of his marriages were political.

6. By commerce through the Mediterranean he held friendly relations with the nations on its shores as far as Spain.

7. By commerce with the archipelagoes of the Indian and Pacific Oceans, he held friendly relations with the Orient, and Africa.

8. By land-traffic he held friendly relations with Arabia, Mesopotamia and the nations around the Caspian Sea.

## QUESTIONS

1. What promise of Jehovah was made to Solomon when he commenced to build the temple?

2. What command of Jehovah, through Moses, was fulfilled in the building of the temple?

3. What then, in brief, were the purposes of the temple?
4. What effect has this dedication on all subsequent dedications of buildings?
5. At what annual festival was the temple dedicated?
6. What the steps of offering the house, and how the divine acceptance signified?
7. What similar event occurred in Moses' day, and what greater event in the New Testament day?
8. Describe the platform occupied by Solomon, and his posture in the several parts of the dedication.
9. In what double capacity does he act?
10. What the salient points of his opening address?
11. The salient points of his prayer?
12. What evidence in later days that in accord with Solomon's petition his people prayed toward Jerusalem?
13. In what signal way did confirmation come from heaven that his prayer was answered?
14. Distinguish between the two manifestations of the glory of the Cloud, II Chron. 5:13; 7:1-3.
15. What says the text of the glory of Solomon, and the extent of his kingdom? (See I Kings 4:20-25; 10:18-25).
16. What our Lord's reference to Solomon's glory?
17. Recite the story of the Queen of Sheba. Where her country? What our Lord's reference to it, and what the sermon outline on Matt. 12:42?
18. What Solomon's relations to foreign nations?
19. When and why Jehovah's second appearance to Solomon?

### XXX

## THE FALL AND END OF SOLOMON

*Scriptures: References in Harmony, pp. 193-194.*

**S**EE I Kings 11: 1-43 and II Chron. 9: 29-31, with which compare (1) Ex. 34: 16; Deut. 7: 3, 4; Ezra 9: 1; Neh. 13: 23. (2) Deut. 17: 14-20. (3) The two visitations of Jehovah, I Kings 3: 14; 9: 4-9; II Chron. 7: 17-22. (4) The whole book of Ecclesiastes.

1. When Solomon became old he fell away from Jehovah in heart and life.

2. He, himself, furnishes the motto for a heading of this part of his life, "Better is a poor and wise youth than an old and foolish king, who knoweth not how to receive admonition any more," Eccles. 4: 13.

3. And he, himself, fitly describes a miserable and darkened old age, thus:

"Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thy heart, and in the sight of thine eyes; but know thou that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh; for youth and the dawn of life are vanity. Remember also thy Creator in the days of thy youth, before the evil days come, and the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; before the sun, and the light, and the moon, and the stars, are darkened, and the clouds return after the rain; in the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows shall be darkened, and the doors shall be shut in the street; when the sound of the grinding is low, and one shall rise up at the voice of a bird, and all the daughters of music shall be brought low; yea, they shall be afraid of that which is high, and terrors shall be in the way; and the almond tree shall blossom, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail; because

man goeth to his everlasting home, and the mourners go about the streets: before the silver cord is loosed, or the golden bowl is broken, or the pitcher is broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern, and the dust returneth to the earth as it was, and the spirit returneth unto God who gave it. Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher; all is vanity," Eccl. 11: 9—12: 8.

4. The immediate occasion of his fall was the influence of his foreign idolatrous wives.

5. They led him astray on these lines: (1) The sensual indulgence of harem life sapped his physical vitality, enervated his mind and blunted the perception and dulled the sensitiveness of all his moral faculties. (2) Being themselves idolaters, they induced him to provide temples for the idols of their own countries. (3) To suit their convenience they led him to locate these houses and altars of idolatry over against God's holy temple. (4) They finally led him to participate himself in this idol worship.

6. His sin consisted of these elements:

(1) Primarily and mainly he sinned grievously against Jehovah, who had exalted him. (2) He grossly violated the kingdom charter. (3) He openly violated the Mosaic law of marriage.

7. His sin against Jehovah may be thus particularized: (1) It was open violation of both the first and second commandment of the decalogue. (2) It was against the light of two visitations from Jehovah, the second one particularly warning him against the sin. (3) In placing the idol houses over against the temple it was flaunting an insult in Jehovah's face. (4) It was a sin against Jehovah's revelation, and an abuse of the wisdom given to seek through philosophy the chief good and chief duty of man, as he himself confesses he did in the book of Ecclesiastes. (5) It was a sin against Jehovah as the supreme and only satisfying portion of the soul to seek happiness by experiment in wealth, pleasure, luxury and other ways as he confesses he did in the book of Ecclesiastes.

8. He sinned against the charter of the kingdom in these particulars: (1) The charter says, "He shall not multiply horses to himself," it being against the divine purpose that his people should depend on cavalry and chariots. But this is what he did: "And Solomon had 40,000 stalls of horses for his chariots, and 12,000 horsemen," I Kings 4:26. (2) The charter said "Neither shall he multiply wives unto himself, that his heart turn not away." But this is what he did: "Now King Solomon loved many foreign women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites; of the nations concerning which Jehovah said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go among them, neither shall they come among you; for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods; Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had 700 wives, princesses, and 300 concubines; and his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods; and his heart was not perfect with Jehovah his God, as was the heart of David his father," I Kings 11:1-4. (3) The charter said, "He shall not greatly multiply to himself silver and gold," but he filled his coffers with gold, silver and jewels beyond computation in value. (4) The charter said, "His heart shall not be lifted up above his brethren," but for display, and for the buildings of his wives and their extravagant support, he raised forced levies of workmen from his own people, and imposed onerous taxes which caused a revolt in the days of his son, Rehoboam, and the loss of ten tribes. See I Kings 4:6; 5:13, 14; 7:19-23; 11:28; 12:4.

9. He sinned against the sanctity of the Mosaic law of marriage in taking wives from nations of the Canaanites and other idolatrous nations. See Ex. 34:16; Deut. 7:3, 4, as interpreted in Ezra 9:1 and Neh. 13:23, and compare I Kings 11:1, 2.



10. We find somewhat of a parallel in Louis XIV of France, who reduced his nation to pauperism to support his extravagant displays and mistresses, so that in the days of Louis XVI came a revolution that painted hell on the sky.

11. The sin of Solomon greatly provoked Jehovah, who sternly denounced these penalties: (1) The greater part of the kingdom was rent from him and given to his servant, but for David's sake, the execution was stayed till Solomon died, I Kings 11:9-13. (2) Adversaries were stirred up, ready to strike on the first opportunity. (3) These adversaries were Hadad, the Edomite, who in David's time had sheltered in Egypt; Rezon, the Syrian, who sheltered in Damascus and who abhorred Israel; Jeroboam, the Ephrathite, whom Solomon promoted, but who, having been informed by Jehovah's prophet that he would rule over ten tribes, did not wait on Jehovah's time but instantly revolted, but when Solomon sought to kill him, fled to Egypt and sheltered there.

12. The fearful consequences of Solomon's sin were sweeping and far-reaching, as appears from these facts: (1) The contrast between the glorious unity when David was made king over all Israel (See I Chron. 11:1-3 and 12:23-40) and the disunion under Solomon's son (See I Kings 12:1-19). (2) This division resulted in the idolatry and destruction of the ten tribes except the elect remnants that returned to Judah, thus preserving and perpetuating all the tribes. (3) The idolatry of the ten tribes was communicated to Judah in Ahab's day, threatening the blotting out of all the tribes. (4) The division made them weak in the presence of enemies to both, and their prestige and position among the nations were lost. (5) The destruction of the ten tribes resulted in the rise of the Samaritans, a mixed people who rejected all revelation except the Pentateuch, and established a rival temple, whose pretensions to superiority persisted till Messiah's time (See John 4:20).

(6) The precedent of seeking in speculative philosophy and in sinful experiment man's chief-end, chief-good, chief-aim, was taken up and followed by Greek and Roman philosophers—Zeno, Epicurus, Lucretius and Democritus, Gnostics, Agnostics and modern radical evolutionists even to this day—all adopting his methods and denying his conclusions.

13. The question naturally arises: Was Solomon's apostasy total and final, and is he today a lost soul? Adam Clark, the commentator, like nearly all Methodists, Arminian in doctrine, teaches that Solomon was finally and forever lost; from which position the author dissents for the following reasons:

1. The record expressly teaches that his apostasy was not total, but only that his heart toward Jehovah was not perfect as was the heart of David.

2. That his apostasy was not final seems evident from the repentance evidenced in the book of Ecclesiastes, which, after recounting all his experiments in turning from revelation to philosophy and all ending in vanity, comes back to the conclusion that to fear God and keep His commandments is the whole of man.

3. The promise of Jehovah to his father David expressly forbids the idea of his total and final apostasy in saying, "When thy days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, that shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son: if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men, but my loving kindness shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee," II Sam. 7:12-15. The contrast here between Saul and Solomon is very marked. Saul sustained no filial relation toward Jehovah, but Solomon did. Saul was punished as an alien;

Solomon was chastised as a son. The Holy Spirit was withdrawn from Saul, but not from Solomon.

14. Solomon's fall teaches many great lessons, among which may be named:

1. Sensuality in a man is like the dry rot which crumbles foundation-timbers.

2. *A little child may learn from revelation in a day more about origin, character, destiny, the chief-end, the chief-good and the chief-aim of man than all the speculative philosophers throughout the ages have discovered or will ever be able to discover.*

3. Man himself, in his moral dignity, is more than all his learning, accomplishments, wealth, rank or social position.

"The rank is but the guinea's stamp,  
The man's the gowd for all that."

4. God himself is the only satisfying portion of the soul.

"'Tis no' in titles nor in rank,  
'Tis no' in wealth like London bank  
To give us peace and rest;  
If happiness ha'e not her seat  
And center in the breast,  
We may be wise, or rich, or great  
But never can be blest."

5. When kings live in splendor and luxury and irresponsibility to moral laws, maintaining vast, varied and costly establishments, the people must groan under onerous taxation and servitude until revolution comes to paint hell on the sky.

6. Men professing themselves to be wise become fools (See Romans 1:22; I Cor. 1:18-29).

### QUESTIONS

1. At what period of his life does Solomon fall away from Jehovah?
2. What motto by himself would serve as a heading for his fall?
3. How does he himself describe an old age weakened and made miserable by sin?

4. What the occasion of his fall?
5. How did these women lead him astray?
6. Of what particulars did his sin consist?
7. Particularize his sin against Jehovah.
8. Particularize his sin against the charter of the kingdom.
9. Particularize his sin against the sanctity of the Mosaic marriage-law.
10. What parallel to Solomon, in his sin, in modern history?
11. How did Solomon's sin affect Jehovah, and what penalties did He denounce?
12. What facts show the sweeping and far-reaching consequences of Solomon's fall?
13. How do Arminians answer the question: Was Solomon's apostasy total and final, and is he not a lost soul, and what the Biblical reasons for dissent from this interpretation?
14. What great lessons from Solomon's fall?
15. How do you reconcile I Kings 11:3 and Canticles 6:8?



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